DH
DECCAN HERALD
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German beats Italy's Cobolli to win French Open

Page 14

23 I.N.D.I.A allies to meet today amid strain

Meeting comes after recent electoral debacles of DMK, TMC and Left

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Top I.N.D.I.A leaders during a protest in Delhi in December 2023, when the bloc last met. PTI FILE PHOTO

Major issues likely to be discussed

- Electoral 'malpractices'
- NEET-UG leak
- CBSE exam row
- Countering BJP's efforts to make use of cracks in Oppn bloc

Problems faced by the I.N.D.I.A bloc

- DMK opting out of meeting due to Cong-TVK ties in TN
- CPM unhappy with Cong over latter's leaders alleging Left-BJP deal
- JMM miffed with Cong over RS seats

Top leaders of 23 parties will gather in the national capital on Monday for a meeting of the I.N.D.I.A bloc — the first after December 2023 — to discuss future course of action. The gathering comes amid strains in the Opposition bloc, with the DMK opting out of the meeting and the CPM asking the Congress to clear the air on its allegations about a "deal" with the BJP.

The meeting is expected to decide on the issues to be taken up for joint action, including electoral malpractices and CBSE and NEET rows, and how to counter the BJP which is trying to capitalise on the cracks in the Opposition and the electoral debacle of the Trinamool Congress in West Bengal.

The I.N.D.I.A managers expressed confidence that discontent within would not impact the cohesiveness in the fight against the Modi-led NDA government.

Congress General Secretary (Communications) Jairam Ramesh said 23 parties have confirmed participation in the 'I.N.D.I.A janbandhan meeting' to be held at the Constitution Club at 12 noon. However, no list of parties was shared officially and it is keenly awaited whether the TVK would join the meeting, with sources saying an invite has been sent to Tamil Nadu's ruling party.

▸ I.N.D.I.A, Page 5A

ANALYSIS

Cong plots cautious course

As some I.N.D.I.A allies faced electoral setbacks in their home states, the Congress — spotting an opportunity to emerge as the undisputed challenger to the BJP — is proceeding with extreme caution. Page 5B

India's spice exports dip 33% due to West Asia conflict, Ukraine war

PAVAN KUMAR H
HUBBALLI, DHNS

Women sorting chilli in Byadagi. DH FILE PHOTO

The prolonged West Asia conflict and the Russia-Ukraine war have severely battered the spice trade, causing a 33% drop in India's exports compared with last year, data from the Spices Board has shown.

Disruption in major shipping routes meant that the country could not ship nearly 77,117 tonnes of spices such as pepper, cumin, turmeric, chilli and cardamom to Europe, West Asia and nine Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

This has resulted in a foreign exchange deficit of Rs 854.37 crore for the 2025-26 fiscal year.

Karnataka is the sixth-largest producer of spices. The state mainly exports black pepper, small cardamom, Byadagi chilli, turmeric, and ginger.

In March 2025, India exported 2.34 lakh tonnes of spices. However, the shipment of spices fell to 1.57 lakh tonnes in March 2026 due to geopolitical tensions.

In terms of foreign exchange inflow, India missed out on earning nearly Rs 635.69 crore in March 2026, the data said.

As the world's largest producer and exporter of spices, India, on average, exports 17.50 lakh tonnes of spices to 180 countries. The country ships over 225 unique spices and spice products across the globe. For the 2024-25 fiscal year, the country earned over Rs 39,994.48 crore. However, the revenue dipped to Rs 39,140 crore in 2025-26, the data showed.

▸ Spice exports, Page 5A

BJP announces K'taka candidate; no RS rerun for Deve Gowda

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The BJP on Sunday night announced its candidate for the Rajya Sabha elections from Karnataka, virtually signalling the end of former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda's Parliamentary innings.

The saffron party also forced a contest in Madhya Pradesh by fielding a third candidate — Mahesh Kewat —putting the fate of Congress candidate Meenakshi Natarajan hanging in balance.

In a statement issued around midnight, the party announced the candidature of Prof (Dr) M Nagaraja as its candidate from Karnataka. The BJP can win only one of the four seats that are going to polls in the state this time and Gowda was one of the retiring MPs.

In Karnataka, two MPs of the saffron party and one each of the Congress and the JD(S) are retiring later this month.

▸ RS polls, Page 5A

One of the best P 13

Umpire who stood in tied Test dies

Vikrama Raju, better known to the cricketing world as one of the two umpires who stood in the famous tied Test between India and Australia in then Madras (now Chennai) in September 1986, passed away due to age-related illness in Mysuru on Sunday. He was 92. Raju, worked with the *Deccan Herald* and *Prajavani* in the circulation department for over three decades.

Monsoon covers entire state; red alert for DK & Udupi today

Bidar last to receive monsoon showers in Karnataka

BENGALURU, DHNS

A scene in Chikkamagaluru on Sunday. PTI

The southwest monsoon has now covered all districts of Karnataka, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) expected to make a formal declaration to this effect on Monday.

A red alert has been declared for Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts for Monday, with extremely heavy rainfall forecast at a few places.

On Tuesday, a red alert will be in force in Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Uttara Kannada, Shivamogga and Chikkamagaluru. On Wednesday, a red alert has been sounded for Udupi, Uttara Kannada, Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru, Belagavi, Dharwad and Haveri.

Bidar, on Karnataka's northeastern tip, was the last district to receive monsoon rainfall on Sunday. Nearby Kalaburagi received monsoon showers on Saturday.

"The southwest monsoon has now covered the entire Karnataka. We're going to officially declare it on Monday," N Puviarasan, Scientist 'F' and head of the meteorological centre in Bengaluru, told *DH*.

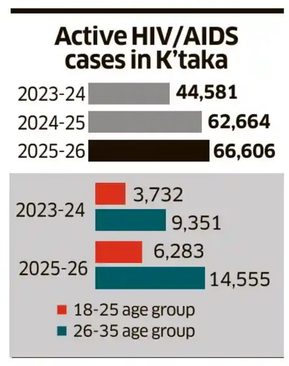
He said it was typical for coastal Karnataka to receive heavy rainfall right after the monsoon's onset.

"The monsoon set in the region two days ago. We've issued a red alert because there is an upper-air circulation at 3.1 km above mean sea level, and it will persist for the next two to three days with only a slight change," Puviarasan explained.

▸ Monsoon, Page 5A

Unsafe man-to-man sexual contact leads to HIV/AIDS spike

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS



Karnataka is recording a steady increase in HIV/AIDS cases resulting from unprotected male-to-male sexual (MMS) contact.

Active cases rose from 44,581 in 2023-2024 to 62,664 in 2024-2025 and to 66,606 in 2025-26, according to data from the Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society (KSAPS).

The 18-25 and 26-35 age groups saw a significant rise, prompting authorities to conduct awareness programmes in college hostels and corporate offices.

Cases in the 18-25 age group increased from 3,732 in 2023-24 to 6,962 in 2024-2025. The figures slightly fell to 6,283 in 2025-2026.

▸ HIV cases, Page 5A

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History-sheeter chased down, hacked to death

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 36-year-old man with a criminal record was chased and hacked to death by a group of assailants on the outskirts of Bengaluru, officials said Sunday.

The victim, Kalimulla Khan from Sulibele near Hoskote, was attacked near Janata Colony late Saturday night.

Preliminary investigation suggests Khan was on his mobile phone when the assailants confronted him.

He tried to escape, but was chased down and attacked with weapons. He died at the scene from multiple deep wounds — police counted at least 20 cuts on his body.

Police have registered a murder case and sent the body for post-mortem.

Investigators are probing whether the killing was linked to previous gang rivalry.

11 stolen two-wheelers recovered

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Baiyappanahalli police have arrested a suspected motorcycle thief who allegedly operated across Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

The suspect was apprehended near the Chinnasandra bus stand in Chintamani, Chikkaballapur district, on May 24. Police recovered 11 stolen two-wheelers valued at Rs 7.5 lakh.

Investigations revealed the suspect had been stealing two-wheelers in Indiranagar, Hoskote, Chintamani, Srinivaspur, Chittoor, and other areas since 2022. He admitted to parking the stolen vehicles at a garage in Madanapalle.

On May 25, police seized all 11 two-wheelers from the garage.

3,000 tonnes of waste choke Dakshina Pinakini river

Activists say authorities downplaying river's ecological threat

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

Waste being dumped into the Dakshini Pinakini river near Kadugodi, as seen in a video grab.

Corporation officials kept vigil at the spot for an entire day to trace vehicles responsible for dumping waste into the river.

Several hundred truckloads of waste dumped over the past two months have impacted the Dakshina Pinakini River in eastern Bengaluru, raising concerns over environmental damage, illegal waste handling, and regulatory lapses.

Drone images accessed by *DH* reveal a huge volume of garbage covering marshy portions of the riverbed, with heaps of waste stretching across a large area.

Based on rough estimates, more than 3,000 tonnes of waste have been dumped at the site.

esidents allege that 10 to 15 truckloads of waste were unloaded daily, initially on private property adjoining the river, before the dumping gradually extended into the buffer zone and eventually encroached upon the river itself.

The dumping reportedly continued unchecked for weeks before authorities intervened.

Last week, the Bengaluru East City Corporation lodged FIRs against people suspected of involvement in the illegal activity and sought police action against those responsible. However, the corporation, which recently seized about six trucks, denied that its own empanelled vendor was responsible for dumping the waste.

Corporation Commissioner DS Ramesh told *DH* that the civic body will ensure violators are penalised. "We will ensure they remove all the waste dumped into the river as well as the private property," he said.

The corporation has also promised to conduct a detailed survey of the affected area. "We believe some portions of the stormwater drain have been encroached upon. We will take up improvement work after the survey," Ramesh said.

River at risk; activists sound alarm

Environmentalists warn that the continued presence of thousands of tonnes of waste in and around the river poses a major ecological threat.

"There is no way the leachate and contaminants released from the waste that seeps into the river system can be treated," said Nirmala Gowda, founder of Mapping Malnad. She also said authorities are underplaying the river's ecological impact as it flows into the neighbouring state.

Link to apartments

Officials familiar with the matter said a substantial portion of the waste dumped into the river came from entities handling waste from apartment complexes in Mahadevapura. These entities charge Rs 12 per kg for scientific processing, but dumped the waste illegally to avoid processing costs.

As per norms, authorised waste handlers must transport collected waste to designated facilities and process it in an environmentally compliant manner.

"Processing waste scientifically involves significant expenditure. By dumping the waste illegally, these people can pocket a larger share of the money collected from bulk generators," an official familiar with the investigation said.

Based on the estimated 3,000 tonnes of waste dumped in the river and its buffer zone, the operators may have generated revenues of at least Rs 3.5 crore, it is learnt.

Helmetless riders: Can police tow your vehicle?

BENGALURU, DHNS: A heated argument in northwestern Bengaluru on Sunday has sparked debate over whether police can tow a vehicle if the rider is caught without a helmet and driving on the wrong side of the road.

Footage of the incident near the Sunkadakatte toll gate quickly went viral on social media.

The altercation began when a woman and her son, who were riding a scooter without helmets, refused to hand over their vehicle keys to the police after being stopped for the violation.

What could have been a routine fine escalated into a loud public argument.

According to the police, the man refused to provide his scooter keys, leading to a standoff.

The prolonged argument left the scooter blocking a busy road, causing a traffic jam.

When a police tow truck passed by, officers loaded the scooter onto it and took it to the police station to clear the congestion.

The incident drew widespread reaction online, with many tagging the Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) on X to ask if officers have the legal authority to tow a scooter for a helmet violation or demand vehicle keys for minor infractions.

Later, the mother and son visited the Kamakshipalya Traffic Police Station to retrieve their scooter.

A senior officer said they admitted their mistake, paid the helmet fine, and submitted a written apology for their behaviour.

A video grab of traffic policemen seizing the scooter in Sunkadakatte on Sunday, as riders flout helmet rules and ride the wrong way.

The incident sparked a debate online, with many questioning whether the Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) can tow a scooter or demand vehicle keys for minor helmet violations.

Deve Gowda calls for national jackfruit, tamarind board

BENGALURU, DHNS

Foreign visitors pick their favourite mango varieties. This is from an earlier edition of the Lalbagh Mango Festival.
DH FILE PHOTO

Former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda on Sunday visited the ongoing Mango and Jackfruit Mela at Lalbagh Botanical Garden, engaging with local farmers and pledging to personally urge the Union government to establish a dedicated national board for jackfruit, tamarind, and jamun.

After touring the stalls, Gowda noted that while the event was promoted as a joint festival, jackfruit was underrepresented compared to mangoes.

"When the horticulture director initially invited me, saying both fruits were being promoted equally, I decided to inspect the ground reality today. I saw high-quality jackfruits brought by farmers from Ramanagara, Kolar, Chikkaballapur, Devanahalli, and parts of Mandya. They are selling whole fruits for Rs 300–400 each or around Rs 50 per kilogram. This is a crucial source of income, but these farmers need institutional support," he said.

Gowda stressed that jackfruit and tamarind are staple crops for many poor households in South India, including Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu.

Staple crops

"From using the pulp to cooking with jackfruit seeds or incorporating tamarind in daily meals, these crops are essential to rural households. The Union government must address the vulnerabilities of southern farmers," he added.

He recalled that Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan had assured Parliament that the Centre would consider setting up an independent development board for jackfruit and tamarind. "I will write to Minister Chouhan tonight to demand immediate execution of his promise. I have full faith he will honour his word and deliver relief to our farmers," Gowda said.

The 27-day Mango and Jackfruit Mela, organised by the Department of Horticulture and the Karnataka State Mango Development Board, will continue until June 30.

Plastic pollution threatens human fertility

Can endanger ovarian, testicular health, warn experts

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

Recent studies where microplastics are detected in 69% of ovarian follicular fluid samples from IVF patients and 68% of testicular tissue samples have raised concerns over their impact on fertility.

A research paper published in the 'Ecotoxicology and Environmental Safety' has linked higher plastic burdens to lower fertilisation rates, hormonal changes and sperm damage.

Doctors in the city say fertility problems are no longer an individual issue, but are caused by environmental factors.

"Human exposure to microplastics is a cumulative, daily issue occurring through three primary pathways," noted Dr Rohit Raghunath Ranade, Senior Consultant, Clinical Lead, Gynaecologic Oncology.

Microplastics, he said, are primarily ingested through water from plastic bottles (especially when heated), through ultra-processed foods, and via certain seafood.

The secondary pathways are through synthetic fibres shed from clothing, carpets, blankets, and sheets. Microplastics are also absorbed through dermal contact via personal care products that contain plastic-based thickeners or microbeads.

Explaining the effect of microplastics on ovaries and egg, Dr Gayathri Karthik Nagesh, Programme Director-Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology said: "Studies suggest microplastics can trigger inflammation, oxidative stress, and hormonal disturbances within the ovary."

"These changes may interfere with the environment in which eggs mature, affecting their quality and development. Researchers are also concerned that chemicals carried by microplastics could disrupt normal cellular processes involved in egg growth," she added.

There is growing concern that microplastics could contribute to accelerated ovarian ageing and a reduction in ovarian reserve. Since women are born with a finite number of eggs, any factor that harms follicles could potentially reduce the ovarian reserve over time, the doctor added.

Microplastics have also affected fertility rate in men.

Experimental studies in animal models and laboratory settings suggest that microplastics' exposure may induce oxidative stress, inflammation, and cellular damage, all of which are biological pathways known to adversely affect spermatogenesis.

"Microplastics can carry endocrine-disrupting chemicals, including phthalates and bisphenol A (BPA), compounds that have independently been associated with alterations in the male reproductive function," said Dr Shreeja Karan, Consultant, Obstetrics, Gynaecology & Fertility Specialist.

Some specific types of polymers like polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and polyethylene terephthalate (PET) are strongly correlated with testicle shrinkage and low levels of sperm concentration in both canine and human tissues, Dr Shreeja added.

MICROPLASTICS' EXPOSURE:
How it enters the body

Primary pathways

Drinking water: Especially from plastic bottles, more so when heated.

Food: Ultra-processed foods often contain microplastics.

Seafood: Certain fish and shellfish can carry microplastics.

Secondary pathways

Clothing & textiles: Synthetic fibres shed from clothes, carpets, blankets, and sheets.

Personal care products: Microbeads and plastic-based thickeners absorbed through skin contact.

IN THE CITY

GENERAL

Conference: National conference on public health policy; Soumya Swaminathan, Srinath Reddy, Rit-vik Ranjanam Pandey to attend; Organised by Institute of Public Health (IPH); Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB); from 10 am onwards.

CULTURAL

Film Screening: 'Iqrar Nama' and 'Paani Paata Poratam'; Faisal Rehman, Arvind Narayan to attend; Organised by India Foundation for the Arts (IFA); Apurva Ground Floor, No 259, 4th Cross, Raj Mahal 4th Stage, Sanjayanagar; from 11 am.

RELIGIOUS

Sermon: 'Vidura Neeti' by Kadur Sridharacharya; Organised by Ragigudda Sri Prasanna Anjaneyaswamy Bhaktha Mandali Trust; Samskruthika Mandira, Jayanagar 9th Block; 6.30 pm.

CITY WEATHER

FORECAST

Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain or thundershowers

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	29.0°C
Minimum	21.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	3 mm
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	96%
Sunset (Jun 8)	6:44 pm
Sunrise (Jun 9)	5:53 am
Moonrise	--:--
Moonset	11:25 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

Man held for robbing valuables from house in Hebbal

BENGALURU, DHNS: A man has been arrested by the Hebbal police for allegedly entering a woman's house and robbing her valuables.

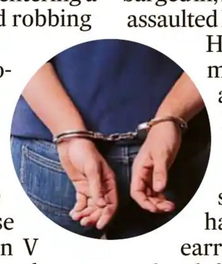
On May 30, police arrested the suspect, Aslam Pasha, and recovered stolen items worth Rs 6.70 lakh from his house in Kanakanagar on V Nagenahalli Main Road.

On May 29, Pasha knocked on the woman's door when she was cooking, police said.

As she opened the door, he barged in, locked the door and assaulted her.

He grabbed her gold mangalsutra from around her neck and her mobile phone and ran away.

Investigations showed that Pasha had also stolen gold earrings, silver articles and cash from another house within the Hebbal police station limits.



Special train to Guwahati

BENGALURU, DHNS: The railways will run a special train between Yeshwantpur and Guwahati to clear the extra passenger rush.

Train 05642 will depart from Guwahati at 7.20 am and arrive at Yeshwantpur at 1.30 pm on June 8.

In the return direction, train 05641 will depart from Yeshwantpur at 11.15 pm on June 8 and reach Guwahati at 11.15 am on June 11. The train will have 22 coaches.

PUBLIC FIRST

CM opts for metro ride to prevent public inconvenience during 'zero traffic' movement

BENGALURU, DHNS

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar interacts with passengers while travelling on a metro train on Sunday.

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Sunday opted for Namma Metro to reach Kanakapura Road, before continuing by road to his assembly constituency.

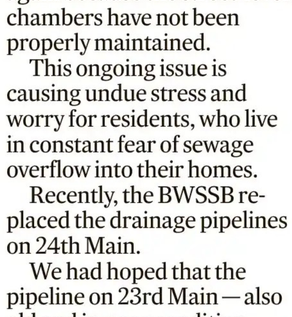
Shivakumar boarded the metro at Vidhana Soudha on the Purple Line, switched to the Green Line at Majestic, and traveled to Silk Institute, the final station on the Green Line along Kanakapura Road.

At the Vidhana Soudha station, he spent time browsing newspapers and shook hands with fellow passengers before boarding the train to Majestic, according to a statement from his office.

During the 45-minute journey, Shivakumar exchanged pleasantries, took selfies with passengers, and even handed chocolate to a child, later taking a selfie with the child's parents. When another child asked for a photo, the CM personally snapped a selfie using the child's phone.

The statement said Shivakumar chose to travel like an ordinary citizen to prevent inconvenience to Bengaluru residents from his 'zero-traffic' arrangements.

Bengaluru Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) Managing Director J Ravishankar, and other senior officials accompanied him during the trip.



Need a hand? Write to us

Letters of grievances are pouring in and we are doing our best to accommodate as many as possible. Readers may write in to highlight civic problems affecting their locality and we will help address them in an interactive and effective manner.

Grievances and issues related to public utility agencies such as Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) and Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (Bescom) would be highlighted in the weekly column.

The writeups, which could be accompanied by photographs highlighting the problems, will be published on Mondays. Mail your grievances to: peoplesproblems @deccanherald.co.in

Blocked sewage chambers in HSR Layout

Residents of 23rd Main, 11th Cross, HSR Layout, Sector 1, are facing persistent problems due to blocked sewage chambers on the roads.

Sewage water is flowing back into the drainage pipes of residents' homes.

Despite repeated cleaning of the internal drainage pipes, the chambers within houses quickly get blocked again because the street-level chambers have not been properly maintained.

This ongoing issue is causing undue stress and worry for residents, who live in constant fear of sewage overflow into their homes.

Recently, the BWSSB replaced the drainage pipelines on 24th Main.

We had hoped that the pipeline on 23rd Main — also old and in poor condition — would be upgraded as well, but no action has been taken so far.

We urge the BWSSB to replace the existing drainage pipes on 23rd Main to permanently resolve this problem.
Residents of HSR Layout

Bye-law violation in Kengeri Satellite Town

I am writing to bring to your attention a serious violation of building bye-laws and a case of public nuisance in Kengeri Satellite Town (Ward 159).

A residential apartment complex located behind my property has illegally converted an adjacent 30x40 residential plot into an enclosed sports arena. They have erected a massive 20-foot-high metal and net structure directly on the property boundary, with no municipal setbacks, in clear violation of the BBMP zoning regulations.

Additionally, they have installed high-intensity commercial-grade floodlights that cause significant light and noise pollution late into the night.

Despite multiple attempts to resolve this matter amicably with the apartment's managing committee, the violation continues. I have already filed official complaints with the BBMP and the local police station, yet no enforcement action has been taken on the ground. This situation represents a blatant disregard for building regulations and a serious infringement on the rights of surrounding property owners.
Savitha N

An apartment complex has illegally converted a 30x40 residential plot into an enclosed sports arena, erecting a 20-foot-high structure right on the property line in blatant violation of BBMP zoning regulations.

Enforce metro etiquette

As a frequent metro commuter, I have observed that many passengers eat snacks, play music, or speak loudly on their mobile phones, causing discomfort to fellow travelers. Additionally, some passengers stand close to the doors, despite repeated announcements requesting them not to obstruct the movement of others.

I suggest that metro authorities conduct surprise inspections and consider imposing spot fines to ensure proper adherence to etiquette and maintain a pleasant environment for all passengers.
S Shashidhar
17th Cross, Malleswaram

DIGNITY,
SAFETY, CONVENIENCE
4+ Crore houses built under PM Awas Yojana
25+ Crore people lifted out of poverty since 2014
12 Saal
Vishwas ke, Vikas ke, Jan-kalyan ke
Government of Bharat
cbc 01101/13/0002/2627

Delay, erroneous exclusion dog PTCL implementation: Report

Study conducted in seven districts of Karnataka

SUJAY B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

Delay, erroneous exclusion and flawed application of adverse possession are among the hurdles affecting the effective implementation of the Karnataka SC and ST (Prohibition of Transfer of Certain Lands) Act, 1978 (PTCL), a fact-finding committee report has found.

As per the PTCL Act, lands granted to persons from SC/ST communities can only be sold after the government's approval. If not, it should be transferred back to the original owner.

Considered a pioneering legislation, it was enacted in 1978 during the Chief Ministership of D Devaraj Urs (1972-80).

The report, based on a study in 7 districts (Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru South, Kolar, Tumakuru, Chitradurga and Davangere), dealt with 45 cases, including the landmark Nekkanti Ramalakshmi case.

In the Nekkanti Ramalakshmi Case, 2017, the Supreme Court refused to restore the land to an applicant who filed the case after 25 years, ruling that there must be a "reasonable time limit" to restore land.

Following this, the Congress-led Karnataka government amended the PTCL Act in 2023, which removes the time limit restriction while reinstating the lands. However, issues persist in its implementation.

The report flagged four foundational hurdles — delay and laches, erroneous exclusion from the scope of the PTCL Act, adverse possession and misapplication of res judicata.

It argued that these hurdles were due to "persistent failure to engage with caste as a lived social reality."

The 10 "contributory" hurdles include partial implementation of the Act, administrative, bureaucratic apathy/ ignorance, historical bonded labour and structural vulnerability etc.

The report also pointed out that social boycott and retaliatory action had led to delays in applications for restoration.

State-level public hearing held

A state-level public hearing was jointly conducted on Saturday by All India Lawyers Association for Justice (AILAJ), Manthan Law, Alternative Law Forum (ALF), PTCL Kaayde Bhoomi Vanchitara Horata Samiti, and Independent Progressive Researchers.

On the occasion, a jury comprising former Supreme Court judge Justice V Gopala Gowda, former IAS officers S M Jaamdar, D Thangaraj, PTCL Legal Expert H L Venkatesh and others, heard the depositions of the aggrieved parties, and studied case files. Rajappa, the claimant in the Nekkanti Ramalakshmi case, stated that he wasn't even aware that the Supreme Court's judgment had gone against them. Rajappa felt the case went against them since they could not afford any Supreme Court lawyer, and that the government advocate did not "adequately" argue.

Venkatesh from Kolar stated that a case he filed before the AC court in 1982 was dismissed -- thanks to the 30-year-limit in the adverse possession clause. However, the report and activists have argued that the adverse possession clause does not apply to the PTCL Act -- a special legislation.

DKS govt transfers senior IAS, IPS officers

Pronab Mohanty is appointed new chief of CID

BENGALURU, DHNS

In the first major bureaucratic overhaul after D K Shivakumar took over as the Karnataka chief minister, the state government transferred a few senior IAS and IPS officers on Sunday.

Anjum Parvez, a 1994-batch IAS officer who was serving as the additional chief secretary (ACS) to the chief minister, has been posted as the ACS in the forest, environment and ecology department.

Similarly, senior IPS officer Pronab Mohanty is appointed as the chief of the Karnataka Criminal Investigation Department (CID). He was the DGP of the Internal Security Division.

Senior IAS Officer Munish Moudgil (1998 batch), who is currently the special commissioner for administration, revenue and IT, has been given concurrent charge as the principal secretary to the CM (Programme and Project Implementation).

Speaking to *DH*, Moudgil explained that the post was newly created to implement high-priority projects across the state on "mission mode".

Deepa Cholan (2008-batch IAS officer), who served as the secretary of the urban development department (UD and municipalities), has been transferred as the secretary of the transport department, while Cauvery B B (2008-batch officer), who was awaiting posting, will replace Deepa as the UDD secretary.

Dr Venkatesh M V (2009-batch IAS officer), who served as the secretary of the government, planning, programme monitoring and statistics department, has been appointed as the registrar for cooperative societies, Bengaluru.

Dr Selvamani R (2013-batch IAS officer), who was serving as the MD of the Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Drainage Board, has been transferred and posted as the commissioner for transport and road safety.

In the case of IPS officers, DGP Mohanty has also been placed in the concurrent charge of the post of DGP (Cyber Crimes), Bengaluru.

Importantly, Mohanty will continue to head the Cyber Command Unit (CCU), established to tackle and investigate cybercrimes across the state. He is also known for heading the Special Investigation Team (SIT) that probed the alleged mass burials in the temple town of Dharmasthala.

In another key change, the government has appointed Chandragupta as the Inspector General of Police, Intelligence, Bengaluru, replacing Labhu Ram. A 2006-batch IPS officer, Chandragupta was previously Inspector General of Police, Security (Intelligence), Bengaluru.

The government has yet to give Ram a posting.

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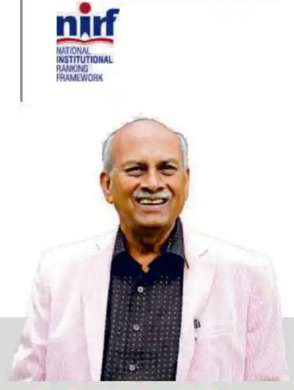

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Ebola: Nigeria returnee placed in home quarantine

KAMALAPUR (KALABURAGI DISTRICT), DHNS: A native of Navanihaal Chatru Nayak Tanda in Kamalapur, who had returned home from the Ebola-affected Nigeria, was placed under home quarantine to ensure public health safety.

Namanath Chappu Chauhan, who had migrated to Nigeria for work, had returned from the western African nation via Kalaburagi on Saturday.

Following the instruction by the district health officer, Kamalapur primary healthcare centre medical officer Jayakumar Samuel visited Chauhan's house and placed him under home quarantine.

Lokayukta arrest ASI, constable for bribery

KALABURAGI, DHNS: The Lokayukta police on Sunday arrested assistant sub-inspector (ASI) Shivasharanappa and constable Jyothi, attached to Station Bazaar police station, while taking a bribe of Rs 10,000 from the mother of a POCSO survivor.

The woman constable had demanded a bribe of Rs 10,000 from the victim's mother on the pretext of providing legal aid to the survivor in the case. The constable had earlier taken Rs 1,000 from the woman as public prosecutor's fee to argue her case.

The aggrieved woman had lodged a complaint with the Lokayukta police in this regard.

The Lokayukta sleuths laid a trap and accordingly caught Jyothi red-handed while taking the bribe amount. The officials then arrested ASI Shivasharanappa, who tried to flee upon learning about the raid, at Kadaganchi in Aland taluk.

Lokayukta Police Inspector Arunkumar Muragundi and staff, under the guidance of Superintendent of Police Siddaraju, conducted the raid.

A sub-station in Ballari city was submerged following heavy rain on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday. The overnight showers resulted in power outage for over 12 hours.

The rain-soaked ceiling of a house caves in at Vallabhbhai Patel Chowk in Bagalkot on Saturday night. None injured in the incident. DH PHOTOS

Heavy rains hit normal life in Ballari; woman swept away in stream

Power infra takes a beating, supply hit for over 12 hours

BENGALURU, DHNS

Heavy rain on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday brought Ballari city to a standstill. The overnight showers caused extensive damage to power infrastructure and severe flooding in several low-lying areas.

A woman was swept away in an overflowing stream in Cowl Bazaar area. The body of Anees Fathima (38), a resident of Lotus Colony, was recovered from a thorny shrub near Andral canal on Sunday morning.

The woman, an employee with a private bank, was returning home in her moped at 11 pm on Saturday.. She fell into the stream along with the moped near Taha School was swept away. The APMC police have registered a case.

Waterlogging was reported at several places across the city. The BMCRC-VIMS hospital staff had a tough time in shifting patients to safety after rainwater gushed into several wards.

The downpour caused extensive damage to power infrastructure, plunging the city into darkness for over 12 hours. As many as 16 electricity poles were uprooted while four transformers were damaged. With canals and SWDs unleashing flash floods, water gushed into sub-stations.

Heavy rains battered parts of Koppal and Vijayanagara districts also witnessed heavy rains in the evening.

Heavy rains, accompanied by thunder and lightning, on Sunday evening threw life out of gear in Karatagi town, Koppal district. Rainwater mixed with sewage flooded roads and residential layouts in low-lying areas. The police personnel had a torrid time in clearing rainwater that flooded the police station.

Pet cat saves its master

The occupants of a house at Vallabhbhai Patel Chowk in Bagalkot had a close shave after the ceiling of the house collapsed following heavy showers on Saturday night.

The family members of Shabbir, a mango vendor, were out of station. A pet cat turned out to be the saviour of its master and his cousin.

"Moments before the ceiling collapse, a pet cat ran out of house. My cousin and I ran out to catch it. When we returned, the roof had come crashing down, damaging household utensils, electronic goods and several trays of mangoes," Shabbir told *DH*.

Bagalkot town and parts of the district, including Mahalingapur and Terdal, witnessed showers intermittently.

Sirsi and parts of the taluk has been witnessing heavy rains since Sunday afternoon. The relentless showers have flooded roads and houses in the city.

Heavy rain forecast for DK, Udupi

Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department has predicted heavy rain in several parts of coast, Malnad and north interior districts for Monday. The IMD has issued a red alert for Udupi and Dakshina Kannada districts and an orange alert for Uttara Kannada, Dharwad, Haveri, Raichur, Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru and Kodagu districts.

A spell of heavy rain floods streets and houses in ward number 4 of Karatagi town in Koppal district.

60% of govt schools in N-K grapple with poor classroom infra

Over 2k classrooms require major repairs in Raichur district

BASAVARAJ S
SFI leader

"Nearly 46% of government schools and colleges lack basic infrastructure, while 38% of high schools do not have separate toilets for girls.

SHRINIDHI R
DHARWAD, DHNS

Nearly 38% of classrooms in 60% government schools across North Karnataka are in poor condition and waiting for a remake. This has sparked concern among the parents as some classrooms have been declared unfit for conducting classes.

Karnataka has 46,174 government schools. However, infrastructure in many of these schools remains far from satisfactory. The situation across North Karnataka including Kalyan Karnataka and Kittur Karnataka is alarming. According to official data, there are 20,000 government schools in the Kalaburagi and Belagavi divisions, and 8,000 classrooms among them need urgent repairs.

Raichur district is among the worst affected, with nearly 2,009 classrooms requiring major repairs.

Worst affected

"Raichur district has 1,667 school buildings. We have identified 2,009 classrooms in dilapidated condition and have instructed headmasters and teachers to prevent students from entering these structures. Proposals have been submitted for the repair of around 1,300 classrooms, with funding expected from the KKRDB," said Raichur Deputy Director of Public Instruction, Mallikarjun. As a temporary measure, two classes are simultaneously running in one room.

In Koppal district, 364 unsafe classrooms have been identified for demolition and reconstruction. These buildings have been taken out of use, and warning boards have been installed to prevent students from entering, according to DDPI Somashekar Gouda.

In the Belagavi division, the Education department sought Rs 105.99 crore for the construction of 618 additional classrooms. However, only Rs 10.45 crore was sanctioned. Similarly, against a request for Rs 22.96 crore to repair 1,057 damaged classrooms, the department received only Rs 75 lakh.

In Dharwad district alone, officials estimate that Rs 15.38 crore is required for repair and reconstruction. Last year, 338 classrooms were identified for demolition and rebuilding. This year, another 173 classrooms have been added to the list.

Compared to North Karnataka, government schools in Central and Coastal Karnataka are in relatively better condition.

In Shivamogga, proposals have been submitted for the renovation of 226 classrooms across 94 schools. The district has received Rs 3.19 crore for the purpose. Davangere has secured Rs 3.95 crore for repairs to 263 classrooms in 117 schools.

In Dakshina Kannada, 91 school buildings and 137 anganwadi centres are set to undergo repairs through the Panchayat Raj Engineering Department. The works have commenced and will be completed soon, according to Deputy Commissioner Darshan H V.

Mysuru has also received substantial funding, with Rs 5.81 crore sanctioned for repairs to 168 schools out of 406 identified school buildings.

A retired education commissioner said that the situation has worsened in Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu after the respective state governments halted the implementation of the NEP and introduced their own policies. "Karnataka alone lost nearly Rs 1,200 crore in central funding last year after rejecting the NEP," he claimed.

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CHANGE OF NAME
I, **NEENA MANJULA PRAMODA,** W/o Kiran Steven, R/at No.006, Stag Sapthagiri Aprt.,1st A Main,4th Block, S.T. Bed, Koramangala, Bengaluru- 34, have changed my name to **NEENA KIRAN STEVEN** vide affidavit dt:06-06-2026 sworn before notary K.V. Mani, Bengaluru. Henceforth I shall be called as **NEENA KIRAN STEVEN** only

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State to recruit 3,395 police constables; apply online from today

BENGALURU, DHNS

The state government has invited online applications for direct recruitment as 3,395 police constables (civil) in various districts, cities and units under the Residual Parent Cadre (RPC) of the Karnataka State Police, Home Minister Priyank Kharge said.

"The competitive written examination, a key process for this recruitment, will be conducted by the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) in an offline-OMR (Optical Mark Recognition) format," he added.

Of the total 3,395 posts, 2,266 are reserved for men, 755 for women, 257 for in-service men, 82 for in-service women, and 35 for transgenders. The selected candidates will be eligible for a pay scale of Rs 37,500 to Rs 76,100 along with the National Pension System (NPS).

Candidates must have a PUC or an equivalent qualification under government regulations, including CBSE, ISC, NIOS and three-year diploma courses. Candidates must be at least 18 years old as of their date of birth, and the government has granted a one-time five-year relaxation in the maximum age limit.

The maximum age limit is fixed at 33 years for general merit candidates, 35 years for SC/ST and backward classes candidates, and 38 years for tribal candidates, the home minister said.

Writing on X, Kharge said the application process would officially begin on June 8, and July 3 will be the last date to submit applications online. Candidates must apply only through the official website link of the Karnataka Examinations Authority: *https://cetonline.karnataka.gov.in/kea/*.

For further information and technical assistance, they can contact the KEA's information centre at 080-23460460 or view the official 'X' account @*KEA_KARNATAKA*, he said.

VIP enters Karnataka politics

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Vikasheel Insaan Party (VIP) on Sunday officially entered Karnataka politics with an aim to provide representation to backward classes and nomadic communities.

Former Bihar minister and party founder Mukesh Sahani officially launched the state unit of the party at a press conference and convention held at a private hotel in Bengaluru.

Addressing the event, Sahani recalled his impoverished background and his journey of political struggle. He stated that having been born into a fisherman's family and having grown up working in Mumbai for a daily wage of just Rs 30, he entered politics for the rights and power of the exploited society.

Can BJP-JD(S) create another DKS in B'luru South, asks CM

BENGALURU, DHNS

In a politically loaded statement aimed at winning over BJP-JD(S) workers on his home turf, the Chief Minister asked the alliance if it could create another D K Shivakumar in Bengaluru South district.

"Is it possible for the BJP and the JD(S) to create another D K Shivakumar in this district (Bengaluru South)? Certainly not. The workers of the BJP and the Janata Dal must understand this clearly," he said while addressing gratitude meetings across Kanakapura constituency.

Shivakumar's elevation as the CM has been widely interpreted as a potentially big boost for the Congress in the Old Mysore region, where the landowning Vokkaliga community has traditionally been dominant.

The CM's statement, which came during his first visit to his home constituency Kanakapura after taking over the top post, could be perceived as him setting the stage for the 2028 Assembly polls.

"Even if you don't agree with anyone else, your own conscience must agree. P G R Sindhia, Vishwanath, Narayana Gowda, and U K Swamy all contested the elections against me. Now they are standing with me, by my side. Are they fools? No—they have joined hands with me because they know another Shivakumar will not come along, and because they want what is good for the people (sic)," said the CM.

Asked whether he should be CM for only two years, Shivakumar called on the people to ensure the Congress emerged victorious in the 2028 elections.

If the Congress returns to power in 2028 with a majority, it will end the four-decade-long trend in Karnataka, where the ruling party has not been returned to power with a majority since 1985.

Woman dies of suspected suffocation in homestay

SOMWARPET (KODAGU DISTRICT), DHNS: A 27-year-old woman from Bengaluru, who had come to Kodagu on a trip with her colleagues, died of suspected suffocation in the bathroom of a homestay at Kalkanduru village on Sunday.

According to the police, the deceased is Vinutha , an employee of a private company in Bengaluru. She had arrived in Kodagu along with 14 colleagues for a two-day trip and was staying at a homestay in Kalkanduru. On Sunday morning, while preparing to leave for a temple visit in Kerala, she went to take a bath and was later found unconscious in the bathroom.

Preliminary investigations suggest that she may have suffocated due to inhalation of carbon monoxide leaking from a gas geyser. The bathroom was reportedly small and had limited ventilation, with only a small window.

Police said the exact cause of death would be confirmed after the post-mortem examination report is received. Somwarpet police have registered a case.

Advised against online games, II PU student stabs his father, sister to death

GANGAVATHI (KOPPAL DISTRICT), DHNS

A second-year PU student stabbed his father and sister to death and fatally injured his mother with a knife, after he was advised to stop playing online games, police said. He also slashed his neck with the same weapon.

The deceased have been identified as Venkatanaidu (45) and Pragathi (19) - the father and elder sister of the student - respectively. The incident is reported from Hosa Ayodhya village in Gangavathi taluk.

Police said that Venkatanaidu was a cook by profession. After dinner on Saturday night, Venkatanaidu and his family members slept in one room while his parents slept in another room. By about 10.30 in the night, Tatarao, the father of Venkatanaidu heard screams from the latter's room. After entering into the room by breaking the door open with the help of neighbours, Tatarao found his son, daughter-in-law and grand-daughter lying in a pool of blood. While Pragati died on the spot, Venkatanaidu succumbed to injuries in the hospital.

The minor in conflict with law, also stabbed his mother Sowjanya and her condition is stated to be critical.

Gangavathi Rural Police have registered a case on the basis of a complaint lodged by Tatarao. Superintendent of Police Dr Ram L Arasiddi, who visited the village, said that the student has not completed 18 years and he is a minor in conflict with law.

Miscreants dig temple site for treasure

HAVERI, DHNS: Miscreants dug a temple situated in a private land in their search for hidden treature in Neeralgi village of Savanur taluk in Haveri district.

Fakkerappa Yallappa Madar, a resident of Neeralgi has lodged a complaint alleging that a temple in his land has been demolished and the site where the idols were installed had been dug up, police said.

Police said that the miscreants trespassed into Madar's land on the evening of June 4, demolished the temple and shifted the idols. Later, they dug a pit of 10-12 feet depth using an earthmover in search of treasure. The complainant alleged that his religious sentiments have been hurt by the act of of the miscreants.

The police have registered a case against two persons in connection with the incident.

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The Oscar-winning composer-singer, A R Rahman, and others perform at 'Jai Ho', an event to pay tribute to the bravehearts, during the beating the retreat ceremony at Attari Border in Amritsar, on Sunday. PTI PHOTO

Ladakh tourism overcomes protests, weather setbacks

Sees more than 43% rise in tourist arrivals in first 5 months of 2026

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

After a turbulent 2025 — marked by prolonged protests seeking constitutional safeguards, weather-related disruptions, and concerns over falling visitor numbers — Ladakh has bounced back strongly, registering a more than 43% increase in tourist arrivals during the first five months of 2026.

Official figures released by the Union Territory (UT) administration showed that May alone recorded a surge of more than 121% in tourist arrivals compared to the corresponding month last year. Foreign tourist arrivals also rose by more than 15% during the period.

The growth marked a significant turnaround for the cold desert region, where tourism is a major contributor to the local economy.

Official data showed that Ladakh received around 3.76 lakh tourists in 2024, including nearly 40,000 foreign visitors.

A flock of sheep grazes in an alpine meadow against the backdrop of snow-clad mountains between Dras and Zojila Pass, in Kargil district, Ladakh, on Sunday. PTI PHOTO

Tourist arrivals fell to about 3.38 lakh in 2025 amid a combination of factors, including prolonged protests, adverse weather conditions, and regional uncertainties that affected travel sentiment.

The administration said tourists from Thailand, Vietnam, and the United States accounted for a significant share of foreign arrivals during the period, while visitors from several European countries also contributed to the growth.

Lieutenant-Governor Brig B D Mishra (Retd) said the increase in tourist arrivals reflected growing confidence among travellers and the administration's efforts to strengthen tourism infrastructure and improve the ease of doing business in the sector.

Tourism Secretary Vikram Singh Malik said the growth demonstrated the resilience of Ladakh's tourism industry and reflected initiatives aimed at improving connectivity, promoting new destinations, and diversifying tourism offerings across the UT.

Carved out as a separate UT from the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019, Ladakh is one of India's most distinctive tourist destinations.

Located between the Karakoram and Himalayan mountain ranges, the region is known for its dramatic landscapes, high-altitude deserts, Buddhist monasteries, pristine lakes, and adventure tourism.

Tourism experts attribute Ladakh's enduring popularity to its combination of spectacular Himalayan scenery, cool summer weather, adventure activities, rich Buddhist heritage, and some of the world's highest motorable roads.

Popular destinations such as Pangong Lake, Nubra Valley, Tso Moriri, Hanle, and Khardung La continue to attract visitors from across India and abroad.

BJP announces Karnataka candidate...

RS polls, From Page 1

With the Congress having numerical superiority in the Assembly, it is slated to win three seats while leaving one to the Opposition.

The Congress has fielded its president Mallikarjun Kharge, AICC secretary Mansoor Ali Khan, and media and publicity department chairperson Pawan Khera as its candidates.

In Madhya Pradesh, the BJP has fielded Tarun Chug and Rajneesh Agrawal while Natarajan, a former Lok Sabha MP, was chosen by the Congress. However, Kewat's entry has queered the pitch, as the BJP is planning to capitalise on possible cross-voting from the Congress camp owing to Natarajan's candidacy. As per the Assembly strength, the BJP can win two and the Congress one.

From the Congress, Digvijaya Singh is the retiring MP from Madhya Pradesh.

The BJP has also announced two candidates — Lingaraj Patil and Raghu Kautilya — for the Karnataka Legislative Council elections.

Unsafe man-to-man sexual contact leads to HIV/AIDS spike

HIV cases, From Page 1

The 26-35 age group saw 14,555 cases in 2025-2026 compared to 9,351 in 2023-2024.

Among sexually transmitted diseases, HIV infection remains the most common in the state with 417 new cases this year.

"We are raising awareness about safe sex practices in same-sex intimacy cases. The number of cases has increased due to outbreaks in hostels. We have had cases involving men having intercourse with female sex workers and then among themselves, which has also contributed to many cases," Padma B, Project Director, KSAPS, told *DH*.

As part of its initiatives, the government is encouraging people to join its BreakFree app to get guided support and assess risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

The KSAPS is also raising awareness through 442 Red Ribbon Clubs (RRCs) across the state, over 40 of which are in Bengaluru, to educate youth on HIV/AIDS prevention, sexuality and healthy lifestyle choices.

"We also have the 1097 helpline to offer support. We are conducting awareness programmes in corporate offices too and setting up two-month-long camps for testing," Padma added.

Speaking of her clinical experience with MSM, Dr Swati Rajagopal, senior consultant (infectious diseases) at a Bengaluru-based hospital, said: "Increased social networking through dating apps has made it easier to find partners, which can lead to a higher number of sexual contacts. Inconsistent condom use, limited awareness about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) beyond HIV, and reduced perception of risk are also important factors."

Syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia and HIV are the most commonly reported.

"In recent years, healthcare providers have observed a notable increase in syphilis and gonorrhoea cases. This trend is concerning because untreated STIs can lead to serious complications and may also increase the risk of acquiring or transmitting HIV. Another challenge is the emergence of antibiotic-resistant gonorrhoea, which makes treatment more difficult," Dr Rajagopal added.

Monsoon covers entire state; red alert for DK & Udupi today

Monsoon, From Page 1

He said the circulation will move further northwards, resulting in increased wind speeds over coastal Karnataka and the Malnad districts.

The IMD has forecast sustained winds of 30-40 kmph at one or two places over Dakshina Kannada and Udupi, and 40-50 kmph in other parts of the state. The department has also warned of the possibility of landslides affecting traffic in the Malnad region. However, authorities have not yet declared a holiday for schools and colleges.

Despite the heavy rainfall warning, the IMD has stood by its forecast of a below-normal monsoon for most parts of Karnataka, excluding Bengaluru. Coastal Karnataka will continue to receive heavy to very heavy rainfall from June 11 to 13, while parts of South Interior and North Interior Karnataka are likely to receive heavy rainfall during the same period.

The official said the current active spell of monsoon rainfall was likely to weaken within the next 20 days.

Amid strains, I.N.D.I.A parties...

I.N.D.I.A, from Page 1

In an apparent reference to the DMK's announcement that it would not attend the meeting owing to the Congress' tie-up with the TVK, Ramesh acknowledged that "some parties" have expressed their "inability to attend this particular meeting for their own reasons".

However, he said they have conveyed their "strong opposition" to the Modi government "snatching away the right to vote of millions of Indians, assaulting the Constitution daily, attacking Opposition leaders through investigative agencies, seriously damaging the livelihoods of crores of Indians, breaking household budgets through relentless price rise, betraying the hopes and aspirations of lakhs of youth, dampening investment climate, and compromising the national interest by its foreign policy".

"Like India, the I.N.D.I.A 'janbandhan' continues to stand united through its diversity," he said on X.

Responding to Ramesh, Trinamool Congress National Joint Secretary Derek O'Brien said: "...Meeting with a common purpose and clear intent. I.N.D.I.A united. Many parties look forward to meeting in the spirit of camaraderie."

While the DMK has made it clear its reservations over attending the meeting, CPM sources said party General Secretary M A Baby would not be attending it "in protest" against Congress leaders like Rahul Gandhi accusing the Left party of compromising with the BJP and wrote to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge seeking a clarification after the invite was extended.

However, the CPM will send its Rajya Sabha floor leader John Brittas for the meeting. The JMM was also miffed with the Congress over the Rajya Sabha elections in Jharkhand where the latter announced a candidate for one of the two seats without consulting the former.

I.N.D.I.A sources had earlier said that a meeting would be held soon after the Assembly election results on May 4.

However, the demand gathered momentum after an embattled Trinamool chief Mamata Banerjee urged the Congress to call parties for deliberations.

India's spice exports dip 33% due to West Asia...

Spice exports, From Page 1

China, the USA, UAE, Bangladesh, Thailand, Malaysia, the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Germany are the top 10 countries importing spices from India.

Rajendra Joshi, Chief Executive Officer of Sirsi-based Kadamba Marketing Souharda Sahakari Niyamita (KMSSN), said, "Domestic consumption of black pepper accounts for 70%, while around 30% of our produce is exported. Europe and the Middle East are the biggest markets for black pepper. The war has resulted in 20-25% of the produce not being exported."

KMSSN's Advisor Vishweshwar Bhat said the farmers were expecting black pepper prices to go up by nearly Rs 5,000 per tonne this year. However, the prices have remained stagnant. "Drop in export could be one of the major reasons for it," he said.

Suresh L Melgiri, a Byadagi-based chilli exporter, said that the war has impacted the export of chilli by 20% to 30%. "Almost all the containers towards the UAE have been stopped."

In a written reply, the Director of Marketing of Spices Board, B N Jha, informed *DH* that the board has initiated facilitation measures for re-stuffing export consignments of spices and products that were returned to India due to disruptions in maritime routes following the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

Further, in view of the evolving geopolitical situation in West Asia and its impact on maritime logistics across the Gulf region, the Union government has approved a time-bound and targeted intervention called RELIEF – Resilience & Logistics Intervention for Export Facilitation under the Export Promotion Mission.

The intervention is aimed at supporting exporters affected by extraordinary freight escalation, heightened insurance premiums and war-related export risks arising from disruptions in the West Asia maritime corridor.

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ವಿಷಯ: ಕಿರಿಯ ಪವರಮ್ಯಾನ್(ಎನ್.ಕೆ.ಕೆ) ಹುದ್ದೆಯ ಅಂತಿಮ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಪಟ್ಟಿಯನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸುವ ಬಗ್ಗೆ.

ಉಲ್ಲೇಖ: 1. ಕವಿಪ್ರನಿನಿ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಕವಿಪ್ರನಿನಿ/ಬಿ16/44953/2023–24(NKK), ದಿನಾಂಕ: 14.10.2024.
2. ಸಹನ ಶಕ್ತಿ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಯ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಹುವಿಸಕಂನಿ/ಪ್ರವ್ಯ(ಆ)/ ಜೆ.ಎಲ್.ಎಮ್. ನೇಮಕಾತಿ/ 2024–25/ ಸಿವೈಎಸ್–1704, ದಿನಾಂಕ: 26.05.2025
3. ಹುವಿಸಕಂನಿ/ಪ್ರವ್ಯ(ಆ)/ಜೆ.ಎಲ್.ಎಮ್. ನೇಮಕಾತಿ/2024–25/ಸಿವೈಎಸ್–1519 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 15.05.2026
4. ಹುವಿಸಕಂನಿ/ಪ್ರವ್ಯ(ಆ)/ಜೆ.ಎಲ್.ಎಮ್. ನೇಮಕಾತಿ/2024–25/ಸಿವೈಎಸ್–2408 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 06.06.2026

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ವಿದ್ಯುತ್ ಪ್ರಸರಣ ನಿಗಮ ನಿಯಮಿತದ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: **ಕವಿಪ್ರನಿನಿ/ಬಿ16/44953/2023–24, ದಿನಾಂಕ: 14.10.2024** ರ ಅನುಸಾರವಾಗಿ, ಹುವಿಸಕಂನಿಯಲ್ಲಿ **ಕಿರಿಯ ಪವರ್‌ಮ್ಯಾನ (NKK)** ಹುದ್ದೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ, ಎಸ್.ಎಸ್.ಎಲ್.ಸಿ./10ನೇ ತರಗತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಗಳಿಸಿರುವ ಅಂಕಗಳ ಜೇಷ್ಠತೆಯ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಸಹನಶಕ್ತಿ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅರ್ಹತೆ ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳ **ಕಟ್–ಆಫ್ ಅಂಕಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಅಂತಿಮ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಪಟ್ಟಿಗಳನ್ನು** ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಹುವಿಸಕಂನಿ ಅಂತರ್ಜಾಲ ತಾಣ **https:// hescom.karnataka.gov.in** ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/–
ಪ್ರಧಾನ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥಾಪಕರು
(ಆಡಳಿತ ಮತ್ತು ಮಾ.ಸಂ.ಅ.) ಹುವಿಸಕಂನಿ, ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ

ಮಾ.ಸಾ.ಇ./ಧಾರವಾಡ/273/2026–27/ದೇಶಪಾಂಡೆಪಬ್ಲಿಸಿಟಿ

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No.: CE(C)/SE(C)/EE(C)/JE(C)/2026-27/360 Date: 06.06.2026

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPPP mode only)

KPTCL invites bids against for the following Work Indent No's.

1) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT3792 Construction of Office building in First Floor of the proposed Hotline Office building to accommodate R&D Lab and staff at 220kV station premises SRS Peenya, Bengaluru. APT- Rs.89,24,692.48/- (Excluding GST) (General)

2) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT3772 Construction of security compound wall on existing toe wall around the sub-station and construction of property compound wall by dismantling of existing barbed wire fencing for vacant portion of land at 66/11kV sub-station premises, Chikkagangawadi. APT- Rs.76,26,627.23/- (Excluding GST) (General)

3) KPTCL/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT3799 Special Repairs to TL & SS Division (Operation) KPTCL NEC Tumakuru. (Reserved for ST) APT- Rs.62,02,892.68/- (Excluding GST)

4) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT3695 Construction of Security Compound wall to 220kV R/S, KPTCL, Lingasugur. APT- Rs.2,96,58,303.05/- (Excluding GST)

5) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT3692 Construction of security compound wall and boundary compound wall of 220kV Receiving station land at Kavoor, Mangaluru 2nd and final phase. APT- Rs.1,27,11,775.63/- (Excluding GST)

6) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT3693 Construction of Security compound wall to 110kV sub-station land at Salethur 2nd and final phase. APT- Rs.1,27,11,745.17/- (Excluding GST)

7) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT3791 Construction of property compound wall to 220kV station land at Netlamudnur 5th and final phase. APT- Rs.67,79,605.85/- (Excluding GST) (General)

8) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT3796 Providing face lifting at the entrance of the 220kV Receiving station SRS, Kavoor, Mangaluru. (Reserved for Cat-II(A)) APT- Rs.59,32,178.24/- (Excluding GST)

9) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT3775 Protection of tower at location No.16 of 110kV Kavoor Baikampady line (KISCO Panambur premises) of Mangaluru Taluk. Dakshina Kannada District (to protect from land sliding during rainy season). APT- Rs.82,34,272.48/- (Excluding GST) (General)

10) KPTCL/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT3784 Providing approach road at 220kV S/s Soundatti. APT- Rs.71,18,630.12/- (Excluding GST) (General)

11) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT3795 Providing periphery compound wall at 220kV R/s Mughalkod (Reserved for SC) APT- Rs.81,35,636.55/- (Excluding GST)

12) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT3797 Providing periphery compound wall at 110kV S/s Hukkeri APT- Rs.54,23,496.42/- (Excluding GST) (Reserved for Cat-II(A))

13) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT3694 Providing security compound wall for balance portion of lease land at 220kV R/s Ambewadi APT- Rs.1,52,54,186.76/- (Excluding GST)

14) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT3798 Providing periphery compound wall at 220kV R/s Athani. APT- Rs.96,60,479.82/- (Excluding GST) (Reserved for SC)

The bids will be received through KPP Portal only. The details regarding participation in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" or **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **08.06.2026** and the last date & time for receipt of bids as per KPP portal. Any extension of Due date for Bid submission will be intimated in the Karnataka Public Procurement portal. Any details required in this regard can also be had from the Office of the undersigned during Office hours. All Corrigendum's/Addendums shall be noticed by the bidders before the last date of submission of the Bids.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Civil), KPTCL, 8th Floor, Indhana Bhavna, A.R. Circle, Bengaluru-09.

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Special Land Acquisition Officer, No. 14/3, 1st Floor,
Aravindha Bhavana Building, Nrupathunga Road, Bengaluru-560001.
No.: KIADB/LAQ/(K-RIDE)/210/2026-27 Date: 01.06.2026

PUBLIC NOTICE
(Under section 28(2) of KIAD Act 1966)

It is hereby given publication for the information of the public that the KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD. Bangalore has proposed to acquire the following scheduled properties for the purpose of Corridor-4 of **Karnataka Rail Infrastructure Development Company Limited (K-RIDE).** The Preliminary Notification Under Section 28(1) in this behalf is issued vide Notification No: CI **24** SPQ **2026** Bangalore dated:**14.05.2026** by the Government of Karnataka and the same has already been published in the Karnataka Gazette dated: **14.05.2026**

All the absolute owners and interested persons in the Scheduled properties specified below shall file their OBJECTIONS IF ANY to the undersigned, Notice u/s 28(2) of KIAD Act, has already been served to the notified Khatedar/Anubhavdar, interested persons. As some of the property owners refused to receive the notice and address of some of the Khatedars are not available, notices could not be served. Hence, this notice is published in the Newspapers to provide opportunity to them.

Any contracts for the disposal of the said lands by sale. Mortgage, Assignment, Exchange or otherwise or any improvement made therein without prior permission of the competent authority, after the date of publication of this notification under the provisions of KIAD Act 1966 will be disregarded while assessing compensation for such parts of the said lands as may be finally acquired.

The map of the area comprised therein and the notification specifying the lands which is proposed to be acquired may be verified in the Office of the Special Land Acquisition Officer, KIADB, (K-RIDE), Bengaluru during the office hours on all working days. Enquiry is fixed on **15.06.2026 at 11.00 a.m. in the Office of the Special Land Acquisition Officer, K.I.A.D.B. (K-RIDE), No. 14/3, 1st Floor, Aravinda Bhavana Building, Bengaluru.** Interested persons are hereby requested to be present with relevant documents. Failing which, it will be considered that there is no objection from your side and further action will be taken in accordance with law.

Schedule

Sl. No.	I.D. No.	Property Owner	L.A/CT Sy. No.	Total Extent	Area acquired (Sq.Mtr)
Enquiry Date: 15.06.2026					Time: 11.00 a.m
Village: Kaggadasapura Hobli: Marathahalli Taluk: Bengaluru East District: Bengaluru Urban					
1	C4/20/300-400/Kaggadasapura/1	DRDO	9/1	3844.46	71.03
2	C4/20/300-400/Kaggadasapura/2	Road	9/1		127.31
3	C4/20/300-400/Kaggadasapura/3	Rakesh R	9/2	3945.63	20.18
4	C4/20/150-350/Kaggadasapura/1	Manjunatha regency owners welfare Association	10/1	7284.24	61.4
5	C4/20/150-350/Kaggadasapura/2	Syand Galaxy Apartment	10/1		94.29
6	C4/20/150-350/Kaggadasapura/3		10/1		45.01
7	C4/20/150-350/Kaggadasapura/4	Dhanraj A	10/1		49.41
8	C4/20/150-350/Kaggadasapura/5	K S Manjunath	10/1		41.74
9	C4/20/150-350/Kaggadasapura/6	Road	10/1		205.18
10	C4/20/150-350/Kaggadasapura/7	Road	10/2	5969.03	73.03
11	C4/20/150-350/Kaggadasapura/8	K Subhash Chandar	10/2		21.73
12	C4/20/150-350/Kaggadasapura/9	T Jayarama Reddy	10/2		167.82
13	C4/20/150-350/Kaggadasapura/10	Road	10/2		75.44
14	C4/20/100-200/Kaggadasapura/1	Lakshmesh N	212	2023.4	138.63
15	C4/20/100-200/Kaggadasapura/2	Road	212		141.63
16	C4/20/100-200/Kaggadasapura/3	Karthik E	212		0.15
17	C4/20/100-200/Kaggadasapura/4	Prashanth	212		68.64
18	C4/20/100-200/Kaggadasapura/5	Manjula D	212		3.84
19	C4/20/100-200/Kaggadasapura/6	Lakshmesh N	212		59.04
20	C4/20/100-200/Kaggadasapura/7	Road	212		92.94
21	C4/20/100-200/Kaggadasapura/8	Lakshmesh N	212		35.8
22	C4/20/100-200/Kaggadasapura/9	K Subhash Chandar	212		45.81
23	C4/19-20/900-100/Kaggadasapura/1	K Subhash Chandar	213/1	4046.8	34.67
24	C4/19-20/900-100/Kaggadasapura/2	R Prathap Kumar Reddy			308.4
25	C4/19-20/900-100/Kaggadasapura/3	Road			40.22
26	C4/19-20/900-100/Kaggadasapura/4	G Prashanth	213/2	5260.84	22.93
27	C4/19-20/900-100/Kaggadasapura/5	Road			87.66
28	C4/19-20/900-100/Kaggadasapura/6	Prashanth Chouhan			27.38
29	C4/19-20/900-100/Kaggadasapura/7	K Pachamuthu			22.56
30	C4/19-20/900-100/Kaggadasapura/8	G Prashnath			11.89
31	C4/20/300-500/Kaggadasapura/1	Shaneshwara Temple	Gramatana	-	41.35
32	C4/20/300-500/Kaggadasapura/2	K N Manjunath	Gramatana	-	88.67
33	C4/20/300-500/Kaggadasapura/3	1. R Kittaiah 2. Munnaiah 3. Ashwath Kumat K V 4. P Krishnaiah	Gramatana	-	98.28
34	C4/20/300-500/Kaggadasapura/4	1. N Nanda Gopal 2. N Babu	Gramatana	-	119.07
35	C4/20/300-500/Kaggadasapura/5	Rakesh R	Gramatana	-	155.23
36	C4/20/300-500/Kaggadasapura/6	Road	Gramatana	-	36.86
37	C4/20/300-500/Kaggadasapura/7	Road	Gramatana	-	153.89
38	C4/20/300-500/Kaggadasapura/8	Road	Gramatana	-	51
39	C4/20/300-500/Kaggadasapura/9	Road	Gramatana	-	137.96

Sd/- Special Land Acquisition Officer, K.I.A.D.B., (K.R.I.D.E.,)
Nrupathunga Road, Bengaluru-560001

TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee greets AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal, in New Delhi. PTI

Mamata reaches Delhi for I.N.D.I.A bloc meeting, meets Kejriwal

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee and her AAP counterpart Arvind Kejriwal held discussions here on Sunday on the current political situation in the country, sources said.

Mamata reached Delhi earlier in the day to attend the I.N.D.I.A bloc's meeting on Monday, where the Opposition's future course of action would be discussed.

Kejriwal drove to TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee's residence here to meet Mamata, whose party faced a rout in the recent West Bengal Assembly elections.

"When the people of India unite, no force on earth can stop their march towards justice, dignity and a better future in 2029," the TMC posted on X after the meeting of both the leaders.

Some TMC MPs, like Kirti Azad, also met Mamata amid speculation that some of the party's Lok Sabha members were unhappy with the leadership.

Meanwhile, AAP, which had come out of the I.N.D.I.A bloc ahead of the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections, would not be attending Monday's meeting.

AAP chief spokesperson Priyanka Kakkar claimed that the sole reason the Congress allied with any party was to strengthen itself, not the country.

Cong plots cautious course as I.N.D.I.A bloc allies unravel

Rahul meets Adhir as rebellion brews in Bengal

ANALYSIS

SUMIT PANDE
NEW DELHI, DHNS

As some I.N.D.I.A bloc regional allies unravel following electoral setbacks in their respective states, the Congress—spotting an opportunity to emerge as the undisputed challenger to the BJP — is proceeding with extreme caution. It is attempting to consolidate its position as the principal pole against the NDA while leaving enough room for possible future realignments if the situation demands.

On Saturday, just 48 hours ahead of the June 8 I.N.D.I.A bloc meeting in Delhi, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi met former Union minister Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury to seek feedback on the evolving political situation in West Bengal. This was their first one-on-one meeting since December 2025.

Adhir, a known Mamata Banerjee baiter, has long advocated taking a strong anti-TMC line to strengthen the Congress in the state. The five-time former Berhampur MP, who lost to cricketer Yousuf Pathan in 2024, is learnt to have advocated that the Congress should strengthen its organisation in Bengal.

One way forward could be to bring Trinamool Congress workers and second/third-rung leaders who are free of corruption allegations and seen as politically untainted into the party fold.

RECALIBRATION

- Congress tests new equations ahead of June 8 I.N.D.I.A bloc meeting
- Seeks to consolidate as NDA's principal opposition
- Adhir pushes anti-TMC line, urges strengthening Cong organisation
- Cong eyes untainted second-rung TMC leaders

While the top TMC leadership, including MPs and MLAs, may see no incentive in joining the Congress — which is not in power at the Centre or the state — the party may start to rebuild itself with the help of second and third-rung political activists who migrated to the TMC when Mamata launched her party in 1996 by breaking away from the Congress.

Earlier this week, five TMC councillors from Melkhigunj Municipality in Cooch Behar joined the Congress, handing control of the local body to the Congress.

Until the 2026 Assembly polls, the Congress seems to have given the TMC a long rope, as Mamata claimed to be the sole challenger to the BJP in West Bengal. Adhir was removed as the state Congress chief after the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, even as the TMC refused to accommodate the Congress in both the LS and Assembly elections.

Rahul held only two election rallies in the 2026 Assembly polls. However, in one of his election meetings, he slammed the TMC for running a "syndicate raj" in the state.

Rahul, however, did speak to Mamata, offering support after the TMC chief's nephew Abhishek Banerjee was assaulted near Kolkata.

Both Mamata and Abhishek will participate in the I.N.D.I.A bloc meeting in Delhi on Monday amid growing rebellion within the party.

The Leader of the Opposition post has already been appropriated by rebel leader Ritabrata Banerjee, who claims to have the support of more than 60 out of 80 TMC MLAs.

A section of party MPs, especially from the Lok Sabha, can challenge the party leadership in the future.

The CPM, another I.N.D.I.A bloc ally, has just lost power to the Congress in Kerala; the Left Front remains in the Opposition alliance.

In Tamil Nadu, the Congress has joined the TVK government led by actor Vijay. However, it has left enough scope for a future realignment by not directly attacking the top DMK leadership.

In Bengal too, it may not be averse to dealing with Didi, but this time, on its own terms and conditions.

Revanth's Hitler remark on HYDRAA sparks row

HYDERABAD, PTI: Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's remark that he drew inspiration from Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler while naming HYDRAA has sparked a political row, with the BRS and the BJP strongly criticising him.

Revanth Reddy

Speaking at an event in Bengaluru on Saturday, Revanth said he decided to establish HYDRAA after observing widespread encroachments of lakes and waterbodies.

"...poor people encroaching lakes and nalas I can understand. Nowadays, rich people are encroaching waterbodies because of their farmhouses and connecting their drainage to the waterbodies. I have noticed all those issues. Then I decided to establish one task force — HYDRAA".

He further said, "Hydra, the word is Hitler's favourite word. His core team was called Hydra, who can assassinate anyone. So, I have taken inspiration from Hitler, and I have named HYDRAA".

The CM said he established the organisation, HYDRAA, with its Commissioner, a senior IPS officer.

Hydra is a fictional organisation from Marvel Comics, which served as the deep science division of the Nazis during the Second World War.

Reacting to the Telangana chief minister's remarks, Union Coal and Mines Minister G Kishan Reddy in a post on X said Congress' "dangerous Hitler, Emergency Mindset" is out in the open, yet again.

"Revanth Reddy, now openly boasting that Hitler inspired him to create HYDRAA and is comparing his demolitions in Hyderabad to those in war-torn countries like Iran and Israel, echoing his leader Rahul Gandhi's language," Kishan Reddy said.

Meanwhile, the BRS in a post on X described Revanth as the "new Hitler", alleging homes of lakhs of poor "demolished".

PM wants youth to keep making reels, pakoras: Rahul on CBSE row

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Hailing whistleblower student Sarthak Sidhant and his associate Nisarga Adhikary for exposing the "collusion" between the CBSE and Coempt, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Sunday claimed Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants the youth to keep "making reels and frying pakoras", but they asked questions and found answers.

Rahul Gandhi

Sharing a video of his meeting with Sarthak, the 18-year-old who exposed irregularities in the CBSE's tendering process for the Class 12 board exams's OSM exercise, he said, "This is India's real youth power – curious, aware, informed. And remember, the country's future won't fall for any deception."

He said Sarthak was "second to none" in "thought, courage, and principles". He and Nisarga did what big media houses and investigative journalists couldn't.

"Mr Modi wants our youth to keep making reels, keep frying pakoras, not ask questions, not open their eyes. But these kids asked questions. And they found the answers too. The country's 18-year-old kid outpaced the CBI – this victory of the youth is truly the government's defeat," he said.

NTA releases NEET-UG 2026 re-exam city intimation slip

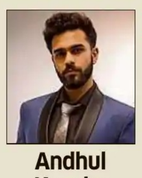
NEW DELHI, PTI: The National Testing Agency on Sunday released the exam city intimation slip for the NEET-UG 2026 re-examination, scheduled for June 21.

According to a public notice, the re-examination will be conducted in pen-and-paper mode from 2 pm to 5.15 pm across 551 cities in India and 14 cities abroad.

The NTA clarified that the exam city intimation slip is not the admit card and is being issued solely to inform candidates about the city where their examination centre will be located.

Hyderabad man shot dead in US pizza delivery 'trap'

HYDERABAD, PTI: A 28-year-old man from Hyderabad was allegedly shot dead in the United States while delivering pizzas, his family members said here.



Andhul Kuncha

FAMILY ALLEGES DECOY ORDER

- Anshul Kuncha, 28, from Hyderabad, had been living in the US for about four years
- He was allegedly shot dead in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, while delivering pizzas on the night of June 5-6
- Employed at an MNC in North Philadelphia; delivered pizzas on weekends for extra income
- Family claims he was lured to an abandoned location through a decoy pizza order

The incident occurred in Philadelphia on the intervening night of June 5 and 6, according to information received by his family in Gundlapochampally near here.

Anshul Kuncha, worked in an MNC in North Philadelphia, US and he was doing pizza deliveries on weekends for extra source of income, Tanvi, the sister of the deceased, told mediapersons.

"We were informed that he (Anshul) was shot in the head three times and left on the road," his sister said.

Nothing was stolen from him, she said, adding he was told to deliver pizza in an abandoned area and they later came to know it was a "decoy". "It was a trap. It was to kill him. I don't know what they gained out of it or what intentions they had. They took my brother and killed him," she said.

She sought justice and appealed to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to bring back the mortal remains of her brother at the earliest.

"We have been informed the body would be handed over on Monday. Just give us our brother back. That's all I want. And I do want justice. We don't have any suspicion... it's a decoy. As per US media reports, it seems there were two gunmen wearing black masks with backpacks," she further said.

Anshul left for the US about four years ago for studies.

Earlier, he was robbed by a few men who took his chain, phone and cash, Tanvi said.

She recalled her brother was a very loving and joyful person.

"He didn't want to go to the US, but we sent him...and (now) look what he ended up in.

This is a message to all the parents who are sending their children to the United States. Do not send your kids to the US," she said.

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

A long, rough road for TMC

In the unravelling of the Trinamool Congress (TMC), shortly after its electoral rout in West Bengal, history is repeating itself. Voted out after three consecutive terms in power, the TMC is witnessing a post-defeat breakdown similar to what other parties have experienced. Former chief minister and the TMC's founder-leader, Mamata Banerjee, has lost operational control, with most members of the legislature party rebelling against her. As many as 58 of the 80 TMC legislators, led by Ritabrata Banerjee, wrote to Assembly Speaker Rathindra Basu stating they were the "real" TMC. The Speaker accepted them as the recognised Opposition in the House, with Ritabrata – expelled from the TMC for anti-party activities – as the Leader of the Opposition.

Ritabrata and his group of rebels framed their move as dissent against Abhishek Banerjee, TMC general secretary and Mamata's nephew, who is seen as her successor. They have not denounced Mamata in public and have even requested her to be their guide and adviser. But these strategic positions notwithstanding, they have broken away from the party and what it stands for. Abhishek's rising prominence in the party had already left some of the senior leaders disgruntled. It is not just the MLAs and leaders who are leaving; the TMC faces the threat of an exodus of the rank and file. Widespread public disenchantment with the party, now identified with corruption, criminality, and authoritarian internal structures, was reflected in the Assembly election results. For a breakaway group trying to establish itself as the real Trinamool, it makes political sense to distance itself from a leadership that has lost the people's mandate.

The MLAs' rebellion reveals deeper fractures, further complicating the party's path to revival

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) cannot complain, given that the dissidents have left a weakened opposition in further disarray. This exit staged by Ritabrata, who has travelled through parties, has parallels with the one led by Eknath Shinde against the Shiv Sena leadership in Maharashtra. There, the revolt was managed by the BJP. Regional parties in other states that aligned with the BJP have seen their bases deplete. With more dissent and defections a clear possibility, the TMC and its beleaguered leader are in for testing times. For Mamata, who fought long, tough fights to hold on to power for 15 years, a fractured TMC raises existential questions. Her loss also diminishes the Opposition I.N.D.I.A bloc. On her home turf, she will now have to brace for longer legal and political battles with an adversary who spares no trick to eliminate opposition.

Highway death traps, hidden and parked

The death of six people in Chikkaballapur after the autorickshaw they were travelling in was crushed between a speeding vehicle and a stationary container truck is part of a disturbing pattern that has turned India's highways into death traps. The list of similar accidents in recent months is alarmingly long. Three people were killed near Tumakuru in January; a couple lost their lives in Siddipet, while six members of a family perished in Shamshabad, Telangana. Three people were killed near Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh; four members of a family died near Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu. A man and his infant son were killed in Odisha's Malkangiri district, while three others lost their lives in Rajasthan's Alwar district. These tragedies occurred hundreds of kilometres apart, yet they highlight a common, nationwide problem. According to a 2023 study by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, more than 13,000 accidents involving parked vehicles were recorded in a single year, resulting in over 5,000 deaths and more than 12,000 injuries.

These accidents expose a systemic problem with clear causes. Highways are designed for vehicles travelling at high speeds. A stationary heavy vehicle on the carriageway or shoulder effectively becomes an immovable wall. Yet trucks routinely stop on highways because India lacks adequate truck terminals, rest areas, and emergency lay-bys. Long-haul drivers, often working under punishing schedules, are forced to park wherever they can. The problem is compounded by poor vehicle maintenance and weak safety practices. Many stationary trucks lack functioning tail lamps, reflective markings or warning triangles. At night, drivers approaching at highway speeds often notice the obstruction only when it is too late. Highway design itself is frequently deficient; inadequate shoulders and poorly illuminated stretches increase the risk.

Solutions lie in improved infrastructure, stricter compliance, and smarter highway management

Equally troubling is the failure of enforcement. Illegal parking on highways has become so commonplace that it rarely attracts action. The solution requires more than harsher penalties after accidents occur. Highway authorities must incorporate dedicated, illuminated truck parking bays and rest facilities at regular intervals. Commercial vehicle operators should be required to comply with regulated driving and rest schedules. Reflective markings, warning systems, and vehicle fitness standards must be strictly enforced. Technology can also help through intelligent transport systems that detect stationary vehicles and warn approaching motorists. Every such accident is described as unfortunate. But when the same circumstances repeatedly claim lives, they cease to be accidents and become evidence of a preventable failure. India's highways cannot serve as parking lots for heavy vehicles at the cost of human lives.

DIVIDEND WITH RISKS

Can India build on its blue-collar moment?

A global race for skilled labour places India in demand, but it must also prevent excessive outmigration

DEEPANSHU MOHAN AND SONAKSHI GARG

Across advanced economies, the slow, penetrative use of Artificial Intelligence, ageing populations, shrinking workforces, and collapsing birth rates are restructuring labour markets. One can see labour shortages not primarily in finance, consulting, or software, but in occupations that require physical presence for utility sectors. Electricians, welders, plumbers, construction workers, machine operators, technicians, caregivers, and logistics workers have become some of the most sought-after employees in the global economy. The consequences of this shift are only beginning to be understood. For India, they could be profound.

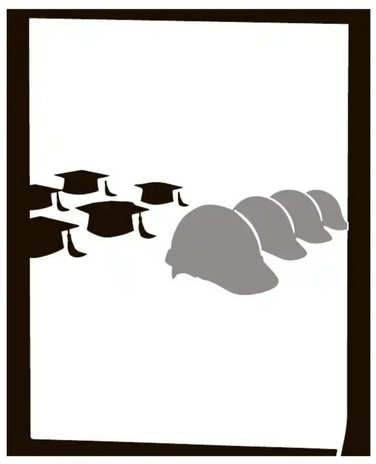
One has observed Indian parents invest their savings in their child's educational prowess while governments take pride in statistics that showcase their population's professional qualifications. Degrees are viewed as the key to national development, while blue-collar employment was or has been considered a fallback rather than a preferred choice. This hierarchy of work, that generations were raised to believe in, is presently being rearranged. Electricians, caregivers, construction workers, and plumbers are attracting high wages because their skills are considered indispensable. This shift in labour demand shall lead to a transformation in the global flow of workers.

For India, a nation characterised by its young population and reservoir of trade skills, the question is not if the labour demand evolution creates an opportunity but is rather whether the nation capitalises on its potential, before it is claimed by someone else.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Secretary-General Mathias Cormann remarked that population ageing is set to cause significant fiscal pressures and labour shortages. Over the past decade, four in ten OECD countries have experienced a shrinking working-age population. It is estimated that if current trends continue, the average regional labour market shortages will increase by close to 9% in the next 20 years. Similar figures are emerging in labour markets across the developed world, with alarming consequences.

Australia is anticipated to need 2 million workers in engineering trades by 2050 to meet its net-zero targets. The nation is already facing a deficit in meeting even half of this requirement. In Canada, small firms reportedly lost $38 billion in opportunities in 2022 due to a labour shortage. In the UK, over one-third of construction workers will retire by 2035, requiring the recruitment of roughly 239,000 additional workers between 2025 and 2029.

Germany has declared that as of January 2026, 30% of construction firms have vacancies. While the pinch in availability is felt in both white- and blue-collar labour, physical trades are



bearing the brunt of it. Hence, a pattern of scarcity is observable throughout the developed world.

All this while, analysts believed that AI would make manual labour obsolete. However, labour patterns indicate that skilled trades are underdogs and AI-proofed. Global markets have started to reflect a 'white-collar recession'.

In the United States alone, 248,000 white-collar jobs have been slashed since the middle of 2024, a 17-month decline, not witnessed since the 2008 slowdown. In contrast, blue-collar industries have held a steady employment rate, and wages in construction and manufacturing have grown 23.5% and 20.1%, respectively, since the pandemic.

India may hold a unique position in the intersection of global demand and domestic supply. While economies cede working populations, India's median age sits at only 28.4, which is more than a decade below both China and Japan.

The nation's dependency ratio stands at a satisfactory 45%, and the demographic dividend, opened from 2005, is calculated to remain open till the 2050s. Forecasts predict 85.2 million jobs will be unfilled by 2030; India is recognised as the only economy maintaining a talent surplus that addresses the vacancies. This surplus is already travelling around the world, with over 1.6 million Indian blue-collar workers employed across 14 countries between January 2020 and June 2025.

India's workforce is moving to quench global needs. However, an integral question is surfacing – 'In the attempt to fill the shortages of other nations, is the country unknowingly creating a labour deficiency of its own'?

A paradox unfolds

India is also slowly starting to face the layered challenge of graduate unemployment and the outflow of its skilled labour. Studies show that out of the 90 million jobs the Indian economy will generate by 2030, 70% will be tagged as blue-collar occupations. Infrastructure jobs already rose by 62% between 2022 and 2023.

Yet, graduate unemployment persists at 11.2%, which is three times higher than the national average. Even though 'less than tenth' is the preferred qualification in recent job postings, degree holders strive for white-collar positions, which the economy is unable to offer. At the core of this misalignment sits the stigma associated with blue-collar work, which is widely perceived as a backup rather than a preference. This reluctance depletes the domestic workforce required to meet India's infrastructural ambitions.

Simultaneously, those workers who possess the demanded skills are increasingly looking outside the country because of higher wages and job protection. Migration to Gulf nations has spiked since the 1970s, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) alone tallying 3.4 million Indian workers and Saudi Arabia hosting 2.59 million Indian employees.

The nation is not short on workers. Demography has dealt India a hand of aces – a young population, with the drive to sharpen its skills.

What it is short on is the will to treat trade skills as first-choice careers and the institutional safeguards and incentives to ensure that an excessive export of blue-collar workers does not occur to the detriment of the national economy. India must realise now that modern economies, even with all their sophistication and automation, still require hands who know how to build them.

(Deepanshu is Dean and Professor of Economics, O P Jindal Global University. He is a visiting professor at the LSE, and a research fellow at the University of Oxford; Sonakshi studies Law and is a research analyst with the Centre for New Economics Studies)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Memories of AIR

When it was time for a news bulletin, we huddled silently before our radio

GEORGE NETTO

The 1950s and 1960s were arguably the heyday of radio broadcasting in India. The unpretentious radio was then the sole source of entertainment for us teenagers in the remote tea estate near Munnar where we grew up. All India Radio was the broadcaster we boys unvaryingly tuned in to for national news, cricket commentary and other entertainment.

True, unlike today, where TV presenters and anchors tend to be obtrusive, we never got to see our radio announcers and newsreaders. However, their powerful and resonant voices projected their unseen personalities – at least in part – quite forcefully. In particular, I recall four AIR newsreaders from that distant era who impressively presented the daily English news bulletins – compulsory listening, as decreed by my father, for me and my brothers. He was convinced that our standard of English would improve considerably by listening to them.

Melville DeMello was then perhaps one of AIR's best-known newsreaders and commentators. Following the evenly spaced 'pips' announcing the time, his rich, bass voice would intone crisply, 'This is All India Radio, New Delhi. The news read by Melville DeMello.' Then there was the suave Surjit Sen, whose modulated baritone reminded us uncannily of Father Fleming's, our school's strict British principal. And, of course, there was the inimitable, pleasant-voiced duo of Lotika Rathnam and Pamela Singh, female newsreaders, whose enviable accent and impeccable enunciation we consciously tried to emulate time and again, none too successfully.

To us teenagers, they were the faces and voices of AIR's English programmes – its stalwarts and veterans – whom we never saw in real life, but whose vibrant voices held listeners enthralled across the country. Hearing them and assimilating the news to the extent possible was a truly educative experience for us.

When it was time for an AIR news bulletin, we dutifully put aside whatever we were doing and huddled silently before our modest Murphy radio mounted on a mahogany chest of drawers. The newsreaders' diction was invariably smooth, self-assured and error-free, though some of their words were beyond our ken. I, for one, carefully noted these down whenever possible, looked them up in the dictionary and used them – grandiosely and often incorrectly – in my conversation!

In particular, I recall DeMello's moving running commentary from New Delhi during Jawaharlal Nehru's funeral procession way back in May 1964. It was so touching and detailed that it left a few elders near me in tears. DeMello was already well known for his marathon seven-hour non-stop commentary on Mahatma Gandhi's funeral, which earned him a place in the Guinness Book of Records.

The powerful voices and perfect enunciation of this now forgotten quartet were, undoubtedly, an integral part of their palpable charisma. They were household names then and bywords for excellence in news presentation. Indeed, to impressionable teenagers like us, they were our unseen (but often heard) role models as far as diction and pronunciation were concerned – and we did unabashedly try to emulate them as well as we could.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Don't resort to blame game. Fix the system

BJP national president Nitin Nabi's statement that 'some forces were trying to push the country's youth towards negative politics' is shameful. Are the youth of India so vulnerable to foreign influence that they can be so easily swayed? The recent exposé of the CBSE system by Class 12 students and the call and demand by millions from around the country wanting answers to the disruption of their future cannot be brushed away as 'acting under foreign influence'. It is unfortunate that the government does not respond to the genuine questions raised by students, whose future is at stake. The ministers and officials concerned must take responsibility, as is done in a democracy, and look for solutions to fix the system. They should not be allowed to evade the issues by blaming others or the past.

Hemachandra Basappa, Bengaluru

Improve results

Apropos 'KCET results: Only 12 govt college students in top 1k ranks' (Jun 7), the state government should take note of this and review the issue afresh to understand the reasons for such poor performance. The education department must effect necessary changes and conduct bridge courses for students entering pre-university courses in government colleges to bring about positive results.

A K Shariff, Mysuru

Good safety measure

With reference to 'Air conditioned helmets distributed to traffic personnel in North Corpn limits' (Jun 5). It is a commendable step towards ensuring the health and safety of traffic police personnel who spend long hours outdoors, especially with the rising temperatures and extreme heat conditions. The initiative should be extended to all outdoor workers.

Suhasini Thapa Manga, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

One month has passed since the (TVK) government assumed office. Has any newborn received the promised gold ring? Have any of these schemes been implemented?

Edappadi K Palaniswami, AIADMK leader

Political campaigns are the graveyard of real ideas and the birthplace of empty promises.

Teresa Heinz

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

Unlocking the mango economy

Indian mangoes offer a sensory and nutritional complexity that industrial agriculture still struggles to replicate

VIJAY KANURU

Americans track flights, pause meetings, and wait in online queues for Indian mangoes. Not for smartphones. Not for luxury watches. For fruit.

Every summer, shipments arriving in the United States sell out within minutes. Both the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Financial Times* have documented how consumers coordinate pickups and rush online orders for premium Indian varieties. Ironically, many of the most devoted fans today are not Indians at all – they are Americans. The obsession may appear excessive until one experiences the difference.

In some ways, Indian mangoes are where turmeric was a decade ago. Once viewed as a traditional Indian product, turmeric evolved into a global wellness phenomenon. Mangoes are undergoing a similar transition – from seasonal fruit to premium agricultural product valued internationally for qualities that extend far beyond sweetness.

From Alphonso in Maharashtra and Sindhura from Karnataka to Banganapalli and Chinna Rasalu from Andhra Pradesh or Langra from North India, Indian mangoes are not merely fruits. They are products of highly evolved tropical ecosystems shaped by monsoon variability, mineral-rich soils, pollinator diversity, and centuries of phytochemical adaptation. Modern agriculture can scale sweetness with remarkable efficiency. Replicating this complexity is far harder. Nature still operates through non-linear relationships that industrial systems struggle to reproduce synthetically.

This is where Indian mangoes fundamentally differ from commercially produced varieties in American supermarkets, which are cultivated for durability, visual uniformity, and extended shelf life. The result is consistency, but not complexity. Mango enthusiasts jokingly describe mass-produced supermarket varieties as tasting closer to sweet potatoes: uniformly sweet and fleshy, but lacking layered aroma and sensory depth.

The comparison sounds playful, but it points to a deeper truth: industrial standardisation reduces ecological complexity.

What global consumers are really paying for is biological richness – unusually rich aromatic profiles driven by volatile organic compounds, terpenes, carotenoids, antioxidants, and polyphenols that shape flavour, texture, aftertaste, and even emotional memory. Emerging nutritional research increasingly suggests that traditional fruit diversity matters not just for taste, but for metabolic and neurological health. Flavour itself may be a form of biological intelligence.

Which is why Bengaluru's surrounding mango belts – from Kolar in Karnataka to Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh – matter far beyond local agriculture. And yet those systems are increasingly fragile.

Mango farmers across Chittoor and Kolar are facing a severe crisis following poor flowering cycles, erratic weather, and climate disruptions that have sharply reduced yields. Thousands of small and marginal growers are struggling to recover even their basic input costs. Some are uprooting orchards altogether.

The paradox is striking. Global demand for premium Indian mangoes has never been stronger, with consumers abroad willing to pay extraordinary prices for Alphonso, Rasalu, or Sindhura. Yet, many Indian farmers remain trapped by weak price realisation, export bottlenecks, pesticide compliance issues, and post-harvest losses. The mango pulp industry in Chittoor – one of the world's largest processing clusters – faces additional strain from West Asia conflict disruptions, rising freight costs, and market uncertainty. This is not a demand crisis. It is a systems and logistics crisis.

A national strategy

The only thing standing between a premium global consumer and a struggling Indian mango farmer is often infrastructure, preservation technology, processing capacity, traceability, and policy coordination. Agriculture today is no longer merely about cultivation; it involves supply chains, compliance systems, and global connectivity.

India urgently needs a National Mango Board that treats mango not as another horticulture crop, but as a strategic ecological and cultural asset – integrating farmer education, export infrastructure, pesticide traceability, biodiversity preservation, cold-chain logistics, and scientific research into one coherent national framework. The economics are compelling: strategic investments in preservation and export infrastructure could unlock billions in additional export earnings while directly improving farmer incomes. Compared with large industrial projects, the capital required is relatively modest.

The Bengaluru airport, already surrounded by major mango-growing belts and deeply connected to global technology ecosystems, could emerge as a natural logistics and export hub – a global gateway for India's premium mango economy.

Americans are fighting over Indian mangoes while Indian farmers are increasingly abandoning mango cultivation under climate stress, rising costs, and policy neglect.

India now faces a civilisational question: will it preserve one of the world's richest fruit cultures through science, sustainability, and farmer prosperity – or allow it to be slowly standardised into mediocrity?

Because once complexity disappears from ecosystems, it rarely returns to the plate.

(The writer is a Gates Cambridge Scholar, Helmholtz Research Fellow, and the Founder of Nanoved Research Foundation)

'Insurance for private players in the space business is in the works'

Shailesh Nayak, *Director, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru, in conversation with* **Kalyan Ray**

THE DEEP TAKE

Shailesh Nayak joined the Indian Space Research Organisation five decades ago and has led many national programmes. A former secretary of the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences, he will be conferred with the Brock Gold Medal, instituted by the International Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing next month, for outstanding evolution of remote sensing and spatial sciences. He will be the second Indian scientist to receive it after K Kasturirangan (2004). A life trustee of the India International Centre, Delhi, Nayak spoke about India's space future. *Excerpts:*

● How has the field of remote sensing progressed in the last 50 years?
In 1969 Vikram Sarabhai unveiled his vision about remote sensing in his presidential address to the Indian Geophysical Union. It is amazing how he thought of all of them, right from agriculture to fisheries to mineral exploration to other fields and what we should be doing with what kind of satellite. When we look back, we see, starting with agriculture, drought, fisheries, water resources, glaciers, oceans and even a new field like archaeology, India has done well in terms of remote sensing applications. We are the leaders as far as the application of satellite data is concerned. This is true not only from the resource, environment, or disaster point of view but also in how it has helped improve people's social lives and household economy.

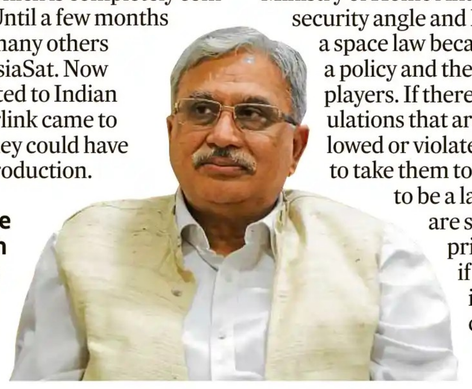
● Going ahead, what kind of satellites should ISRO focus on, and what will the private players do?
The private players are looking at satellites that have commercial values. They focus on what they can sell – either the information or data. If you see Planet Labs or others, they by and large concentrate on high-resolution data, which has a lot of commercial markets. I think ISRO will continue to support areas like oceans and atmosphere. Such data is largely given freely the world over because it helps develop societal applications. It is also possible that one day those satellites can be made and launched by the private players, and the government may buy the data from them.

ISRO will continue to focus on planetary research and on INSAT-type satellites that are too complex for the private sector now. But in the future, such satellites can be made by the private players, like in the United States. Going ahead, satellites should be seen as infrastructure just like the road or rail networks which the private sector also builds. Who is developing such infrastructure is not relevant. The issue is how best we can make use of it for the public good.

● While private players have entered the space sector in India, do they need to be given a longer rope?
We have to give them some time because some of these technologies are complex and involve a lot of risk. In India after 50 satellite launches, there are still back-to-back PSLV failures. SpaceX and ESA also have similar failures. In the space business, failure is part of the system, and the risk has to be taken. We need an insurance system to address such risks. Government satellites and launch vehicles are not insured, but private players will need that ecosystem. The government is building such an ecosystem to provide support to launch vehicles or satellites. Otherwise, the start-ups cannot take on the risk of developing large satellites.

● Is a scheme being worked out to provide insurance to private companies in the space business?
I understand a scheme is being worked out to provide support for launching. It has to be there. Also, once it becomes an industry, there has to be a system of regular production. After one satellite, we can't say we don't need more. The people and facilities should remain engaged. That can happen when satellites become a part and parcel of us.

● Is it happening?
This is happening especially in communication, which is completely commercialised. Until a few months back Jio and many others were hiring AsiaSat. Now they have shifted to Indian satellites. Starlink came to low orbit so they could have factory-like production.



● How will the second launch port, which is coming up in Tamil Nadu, be used?
It is for the private players to launch on-demand satellites. The technology to manufacture the small satellite launch vehicle needed for such satellites has been transferred to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, and it should be ready in a couple of years.

● Is there any progress in framing the long-debated space law?
Consultation is ongoing with different departments because apart from the Ministry of Law, the sector involves the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs due to the security angle and ISRO. We need a space law because we have a policy and there are private players. If there are certain regulations that are not being followed or violated and you want to take them to court, there has to be a law. Since there are still not many private players, if the legislation is realised in a couple of years, it should be okay.

The bissu of Sulawesi embody an ancient Bugis tradition that recognises multiple genders and offers a rare example of inclusion rooted in faith and culture

SUI-LEE WEE AND HASYA NINDITA

The bissu in the Indonesian village of Segeri lead a ritual before the rice planting season that includes a sacred plough. NYT

The land of five genders that reveres trans priests

The Indonesian dancers, dressed in resplendent red and gold silks, swayed in rhythm to the beating drums and the piercing wail of woodwind instruments. Pointing a dagger to their throats, they jumped, stomped and knelt down.`

Then, in the climax of the ritual, they twisted the blades into their necks again and again. A man in the audience recoiled.

But the dancers did not bleed.

This illusion of invincibility reflected the mysticism associated with the dancers. They are the bissus of Sulawesi — a star-shaped Indonesian island — whose lineage goes back more than a millennium. They are considered spiritual leaders and a bridge between the earthly and celestial because they are thought to embody both male and female traits.

They are called on to pray at events such as weddings, births and deaths in southern Sulawesi. To earn the blessings of the gods, they participate in a self-stabbing ritual known as the ma'giri, in which they display their powers by emerging unscathed.

One night last November, we were among dozens of people in a crowded red house in the village of Segeri, watching the highlight of a three-day rice-planting ceremony. But the night was also a celebration of gender fluidity.

Born with male sex characteristics and raised as boys, the current group of bissus are feminine in appearance. Their sacred rituals embody both genders: the daggers represented masculinity; the colourful silks femininity.

"Within a bissu, both male and female exist, and that is perfection," said Kahar Eka, 52, a senior bissu, who wore a distinctly male attire of a peci hat and trousers, a day after donning an elaborate headdress embedded with flowers.

The bissus are revered by the Bugis people, who number around 6.4 million and are the most populous ethnic group in South Sulawesi province. Renowned for being master seafarers, they hold many beliefs that predate the arrival of Islam in Indonesia, which is now the world's largest Muslim-majority country. For instance, they believe in five genders. These are:

- Cisgender men and women (cisgender people have gender identities that match their sex assigned at birth)
- Men who exhibit feminine traits
- Women who exhibit masculine traits
- Bissu

Eka, who commonly goes by just one name, remembers feeling effeminate even as a young boy; but that sentiment was rejected by Eka's father, a conservative Muslim. Growing up in Sulawesi, Eka often looked at the bissus and wondered why they were respected, but the *calabai* — or men who exhibited feminine traits — were bullied. The calling to be a bissu, Eka said, came in a fever dream.

In Segeri — which is surrounded by expansive rice paddies and wooden houses on stilts the traditional architecture of the Bugis people — and in most parts of Indonesia there are no fights over pronouns, bathrooms or representation. (The Indonesian language has no gendered pronouns.) Some bissus wear the *peci* and a *hijab* over it.

Sharyn Davies, an associate professor at Monash University in Australia who has studied the bissus, said when Islam came to Indonesia, it arrived with the idea that "God created you as you are." By contrast, the early Christian missionaries to Sulawesi told local people that they had to be either men or women, or be killed.

"From the very start, they've been able to find a place within Islam," Davies said.

Eka is an example of that straddling of genders and religious beliefs. In 2023, Eka completed the Hajj, the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, dressed as a man and accompanied by Eka's longtime male partner.

"By going on the Hajj, I wanted to show the general public that even though we are waria, God still provides for us," said Eka, using the Indonesian term for transgender, a portmanteau of the words for man and woman. But the bissus have faced many hardships. After Indonesia became independent in 1945 from Dutch colonialism, they lost their traditional agrarian livelihoods because their lands were taken by the state. In the 1950s, an Islamic armed movement known as "Operation Toba," or operation repentance, persecuted the bissus in the name of purifying Indonesia.

"They had to choose between living as a real man, or being killed or having their heads shaved," said Puang Matoa Bissu Ancu, the 61-year-old chief bissu of a region neighbouring Segeri.

In the 1960s, they were also swept up during the anti-communist purge ordered by the dictator Suharto. As recently as the 1990s, it was very difficult to find bissus because they hid; few wanted to be one out of fear and religious pressure, according to Halilintar Lathief, an Indonesian anthropologist who specialises in bissu history.

Today, many bissus worry that they are likely the last generation left. They know that they live by the whims of politics and religion, especially in a country where Islamic fundamentalism is on the rise.

Job opportunities are few and far between. Like many transgender people in Indonesia, bissus often find that they are limited to being performers, makeup artists or hairdressers.

Last November was the first time that all 22 aspiring and official bissus had come together — because they obtained government funding for being an "intangible cultural heritage." Only four were officially inaugurated, according to Eka.

Ardiansyah Anwar, 25 — who is known as Anca — was training to be inaugurated as a bissu. Under the mentorship of Puang Matoa and Eka, Anca was memorising the sacred mantras and prayers necessary for ceremonies. Currently, Anca is one of two "Gen Z" bissus, Anca said.

The training includes memorising the "I La Galigo," the Bugis creation myth poem that dates to the 14th century and is 300,000 lines long. Then, there's the Torilangi, or what is known as the language of the heavens. The language does not have its own script, but is passed down orally or written down using the alphabet of the Bugis people. Candidates must also understand Bugis cosmology, learn how to read natural signs to predict the weather, determine planting seasons and calculate auspicious days. And one must be celibate.

While a musical-theatre work based on the "I La Galigo" has been staged in New York, as well as in parts of Europe and Asia, the bissus remain relatively obscure even in Indonesia, an ethnically diverse archipelago that sprawls three time zones.

The day after the self-stabbing ritual, the bissus walked for hours through rice paddies, with the villagers carrying the *rakala manurung*, a sacred plow. The bissus wore white headscarves, similar to the turbans worn by Muslim clerics, and tied them with colourful headbands.

Along the way, happy children and villagers scooped up buckets of water and directed hoses at us. There were crashing cymbals and yelps of joy, symbolising the villagers' hopes for rain.

The New York Times

Go beyond Bengaluru, tap Kalyana Karnataka

G KUMAR NAIK

There are many theories about why some regions develop while others remain behind for generations. Many factors, including geography, institutions, human capital, and history, determine the development level of any region. While coastal regions often had advantages because trade routes, ports, and investment naturally flowed towards them and development has a natural pull, regions such as Kalyana Karnataka, which are landlocked and historically neglected, require political will and determined leadership and long-term public investment to unlock their potential.

I have spent years in Raichur and Yadgiri, first as deputy commissioner and now as a member of Parliament. What strikes me is the deep sense of hope that still exists in people of this region—visible in conversations with young people, in families that continue to invest in education despite hardship, and in workers who believe their children can build a different future. They believe change is possible. That belief is itself a public resource, and governments that fail to respond to it eventually lose something very difficult to recover.

The guarantee schemes introduced by the Karnataka government gave families a necessary safety net during a period of economic stress and uncertainty. These programmes are protecting vulnerable households and have restored dignity to many who were struggling. But communities also need opportunity, mobility, and economic direction. People want to see a future being built around them. They want to believe that their children will have more choices than they did.

The central government has made its priorities visible through the regions where it has concentrated investment. The national infrastructure spending has largely flowed into large cities, coastal corridors, industrial clusters, ports, expressways, and logistics networks that were already economically connected and politically visible.

The state government, on the other hand, has focused on reducing educational gaps, expanding irrigation, and supporting industrial development in backward districts. These interventions were necessary and important. The next stage now requires strategic infrastructure that can create employment at scale and strengthen the state economy.

Bengaluru is an extraordinary city and remains the economic engine of Karnataka. Its growth must continue and its infrastructure must be strengthened. But an economy that depends too heavily on one city becomes vulnerable. This is evident now, more than ever, through the global economic shocks currently being felt. Karnataka requires more than one engine of growth. Can a backward region such as Kalyana Karnataka, be a growth engine?

Kalyana Karnataka possesses enormous, untapped advantages. Raichur, for example, is located roughly 180 kilometres from Hyderabad, one of the largest and fastest-growing urban markets in India. Yet the region still lacks modern freight systems, integrated cold storage networks, and logistics infrastructure capable of connecting farmers, producers, and workers to that nearby market efficiently.

Kalyana Karnataka cannot be viewed merely as an administrative unit that requires periodic interventions. It must be recognised as a region of significant economic potential, strategic geographic importance, and millions of citizens whose aspirations deserve a place at the centre of Karnataka's development story. For far too long, people across the region have waited to hear a clear and credible commitment that their future matters, that their talent will be matched by opportunity, and that there is a serious long-term vision for the region's transformation.

The Congress government earned credibility by protecting vulnerable families through the guaranteed programmes. The next chapter must focus on economic transformation, regional ambition, and long-term investment in districts that have historically remained outside the centre of economic planning.

With D K Shivakumar assuming office as chief minister, there is a renewed sense of possibility. Few leaders in Karnataka's contemporary politics have demonstrated the organisational ability, determination, and executional focus that he has consistently brought to public life.

The choices the new chief minister makes now will shape Karnataka's economic geography for generations. A bold commitment to strengthen Kalyana Karnataka's strategic infrastructure would send a powerful message that growth, investment, and opportunity are meant to reach every corner of the state.

(The writer is a retired IAS officer and Congress Lok Sabha member from Raichur)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: JUNE 1976

Resounding win for Congress in State Council polls

Bangalore, June 7
The Congress secured a resounding victory today when nine out of 11 seats in the State Legislative Council were annexed by its candidates in the biennial elections. The two other seats were won by the Congress (O) and the Jan Sangh nominees in the graduates constituency from Bangalore City. The Congress made a clean sweep of all the seven seats from the local authorities constituency and wrested the south-west teachers constituency from the Jan Sangh. Six of the seven local authorities seats were earlier held by the Congress (O).

25 YEARS AGO: JUNE 2001

Team set up to monitor storage level in Cauvery

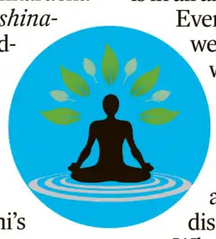
New Delhi, June 7
The meeting of the Cauvery Monitoring Committee held here today took place in a cordial atmosphere although Tamil Nadu demanded that Karnataka should stick to the weekly schedules for releasing water and the latter stating that it would adhere to the interim award of the Cauvery water disputes tribunal while keeping in mind the interests of the two states and the storage levels in the State's reservoirs. The meeting decided to set up a sub-group of experts to explore the need for uniformity in measuring storage levels in reservoirs.

OASIS | PRASANNA S HARIHAR

When silence becomes knowledge

Is silence an absence of spoken words? Is it not much more than that, an absence of even thoughts that arise and clutter our minds? But then how can that 'mind' not produce thoughts? Thoughts are involuntarily produced, but silence, then, is to watch those thoughts and see them vanish away, where we do not associate with them either as spoken words or in actions. Then, can silence be knowledge?

Lord Dakshinamurthy is the embodiment of knowledge and an epitome of silence. He taught, only through silence, to older sages who were his disciples who had accepted him as their guru. Their ignorance was washed away when they gained the true knowledge, but all was facilitated in silence. Adi Guru Sri Shankaracharya, in his composition *Dakshinamurthy Ashtakam*, has alluded to 'instructions through silence' as a concise form of teaching the underlying aspects of Vedanta implied in the *shlokas*.



In the last century, Bhagwan Ramana Maharshi's dictum centred around *Chumma Irru* (just be), wherein His disciples learnt the most in His presence marked by silence where all their sought questions vanished or dissolved to a naught to get them closer to the Truth – the *Atma Swaroopa* that is in all and around.

Even in this empirical world, do we not long for silence to sleep well after a tiring day? Do we not ask our young (grand) children to play outside so we can sit in silence and reflect deeply? Do we not hush those around us when an important discussion is underway?

Why is 'silence' so revered, more so on the spiritual path? Silence is the starting point before any words are spoken, and we need to realise that origin. In the quietness of the mind sans any chatter, what is revealed is considered beyond the mind but exists always. That existence, which shines bright to reveal everything in its path, including body-mind-intelligence, is knowledge – the ultimate truth. The Self, which is truth itself, says our Upanishads, is beyond speech.

Quotes are varying expressions of words like Rumi's, 'Silence is the language of God; it speaks to the soul' or Lao Tzu's: 'Silence is a source of great strength', but silence as knowledge is the very origin before any thoughts, words, and actions arise.

The ultimate is that silence is knowledge.

Women without partners: Southern states top the national chart

Survey: TN, Kerala, K'taka have more share of those widowed, divorced or separated

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

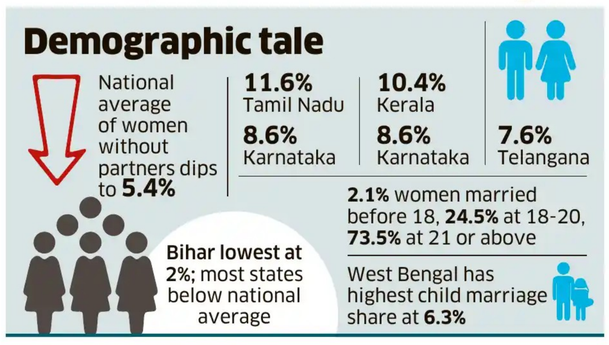
The proportion of women without partners due to widowhood, divorce or separation is higher in five south Indian states compared to the rest of the country, with Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka topping the list, according to the latest Sample Registration Survey.

The SRS Statistical Report 2024 shows Tamil Nadu has the highest proportion of widowed, divorced or separated women at 11.6%, followed by Kerala at 10.4% and Karnataka at 8.6%. Andhra Pradesh recorded 8.6%, while Telangana stood at 7.6%.

Interestingly, Tamil Nadu and Kerala registered a marginal rise from 2023 levels — 11% and 10.3% — while the other southern states saw a decline.

Across India, 5.4% of women were widowed, separated or divorced, which is a slight dip from 5.6% in 2023. For men, the proportion was 1.6%, down from 1.7% last year.

Bihar had the lowest share, with just 2% of women without partners among those ever married. Most states had figures below the national average.


Demographic tale
National average of women without partners dips to 5.4%
11.6% Tamil Nadu
10.4% Kerala
8.6% Karnataka
8.6% Karnataka
7.6% Telangana
2.1% women married before 18, 24.5% at 18-20, 73.5% at 21 or above
Bihar lowest at 2%; most states below national average
West Bengal has highest child marriage share at 6.3%

Madhya Pradesh recorded 5.5%, Maharashtra 6%, while Uttarakhand and West Bengal each stood at 5.6%. Uttar Pradesh had 3.1% of such women.

At the national level, the report said that 2.1% of women were married before the age of 18, 24.5% between the ages of 18 and 20, and 73.5% at 21 or above. In rural areas, the corresponding figures were 2.4%, 27.4% and 70.2%, while in urban areas, they were 1.1%, 16.6% and 82.2%.

Among the larger states, West Bengal recorded the highest share of women married before 18 at 6.3%, followed by Jharkhand at 4.9%. The lowest was observed in Delhi (0%) and Kerala (0.04%), followed by Himachal Pradesh and Haryana at 0.4% and 0.7%, respectively.

Rural-urban divide

The mean age at effective marriage for women in 2024 was 23.1 years, the report said, highlighting a rural-urban disparity — 22.6 years in rural areas and 24.4 years in urban areas.

"This urban-rural gap is consistently observed across India and within individual States and Union Territories, where females in urban areas tend to marry at a later age compared to their rural counterparts," it said. The mean age for women in Karnataka was 24.8 years, while it was 25.1 years in Kerala.

Data 'missing' in NFHS monitored via national systems: Sources

NEW DELHI, PTI: Union health ministry sources said the indicators claimed to be "missing" in the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-6 Fact Sheets are being monitored through dedicated national surveys and administrative databases and therefore were not duplicated in the preliminary release.

Responding to "commentary in sections of the media regarding the absence of certain indicators", official sources emphasised that the factsheets represent only the first stage of dissemination and cover 101 major indicators intended to provide a concise snapshot of India's most critical health and demographic trends.

"The factsheets are the first stage of dissemination. The detailed national report will provide a much broader picture," they said.

It will be released subsequently with a much wider range of indicators, detailed analyses and methodological documentation, they added. "The objective is to ensure that each indicator is reported through the most appropriate and authoritative source, reducing duplication and improving overall data coherence," one of the sources said.

Specialised surveys

Sources noted that several indicators cited as "missing" from the factsheets are already being monitored through dedicated national systems. Sanitation and clean cooking fuel coverage, for instance, are tracked through specialised surveys and administrative platforms such as Swachh Survekshan, they said.

2022 Raj crisis was not revolt against Sonia: Ashok Gehlot

JAIPUR, PTI: Former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot on Sunday said that the incident in September 2022 was not a revolt against the Congress high command but a disagreement among the MLAs over Sachin Pilot's possible elevation as the CM.

Ashok Gehlot

He said there is no alternative to truth and Sachin Pilot should accept it.

A Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting was called in Jaipur on September 25, 2022, to discuss the leadership of the Rajasthan government if Gehlot were to be elected president of the party, but the party MLAs close to Gehlot did not attend the meeting and opposed any move to make Pilot the CM.

Gehlot said that he was in line to become the Congress president, but such a situation unfolded that appeared to be a conspiracy, and he ended up with a bad reputation. However, he felt sorry in front of Sonia Gandhi for not being able to get a resolution passed in the CLP meeting.

"It is repeatedly asked what happened on September 25. There can never be a revolt against the high command," he said, adding that the incident was against "Sachin Pilot, whose name was being circulated" that he could take oath as the CM.

535 Raj farmers died using pesticides in 2 yrs

JAIPUR, PTI: As many as 535 farmers have died while using pesticides in Rajasthan between January 2024 and January 2026, according to information provided in response to a Legislative Assembly question.

The agriculture department, in a written reply to an unstarred question by Congress MLA Amin Kagzi, said that Rs 5.10 crore in assistance was provided to the families of deceased farmers under the chief minister's farmer welfare scheme during that period.

Nepal not for Lipulekh route to Mansarovar

Balen Shah govt ready for talks to find solution

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Nepal continues to object to India's bilateral arrangement with China for pilgrimage to Kailash Mansarovar in the Tibet Autonomous Region of China through the Lipulekh Pass, which Nepal persistently claimed as a part of its territory.

The new government led by Prime Minister Balen Shah has insisted that China and India could not have such a bilateral arrangement without its consent.

According to sources, New Delhi and Kathmandu agreed to resume the bilateral process to settle the territorial dispute, with the next meeting of the survey officials of the two governments being scheduled on August 24 and 25.

Shisir Khanal

"We need historical evidence, and we simply wanted to explore whether we could gain access to certain documents that may be available in libraries or archives in the UK," Nepal's foreign minister Shisir Khanal told journalists in New Delhi, a day after meeting his Indian counterpart.

His remark comes in the wake of India rejecting any third-party mediation in its boundary talks with Kathmandu. "We were not asking for mediation (by the UK)," Khanal said.

Balen Shah recently said the UK should be involved in the efforts to settle his country's boundary dispute.

Khanal sought to clarify the statement made by Shah on Sunday.

"If you listened to what he (Shah) said in Parliament, he stated very clearly and specifically that we wanted to resolve our border disputes through dialogue and diplomatic channels," said the foreign minister of the new Rashtriya Swatantra Party government.

"No problem is too large, and no boundary too complex, when we sit down with an open heart, a rational mind and mutual respect," he added.

The territorial dispute has its origin in the Treaty of Sugauli, which Nepal had signed with the British East India Company in 1816. Both New Delhi and Kathmandu are still committed to the treaty, which identified the Kali River as the India-Nepal border in the region. They, however, could not resolve differences in perception over the source of the river.

Kathmandu claims that the river originated from Limpiyadhura, and that is why Kalapani and Lipulekh on the east side of the stream are part of the territory of Nepal.

Conflict source

The territorial dispute has its origin in the Treaty of Sugauli

Nepal signed the treaty with the British East India Company in 1816

Both New Delhi and Kathmandu are committed to the treaty, which identified the Kali River as the India-Nepal border

HOWEVER, DIFFERENCES PERSIST OVER THE SOURCE OF THE RIVER

Indian households pay lowest prices for LPG globally amid West Asia crisis: Govt

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Indian households continue to pay among the lowest prices for cooking gas globally, even as international LPG prices have risen sharply due to disruptions in West Asia, the government said on Sunday.

The Petroleum and Natural Gas on Saturday increased the price of a 14.2-kg domestic LPG cylinder by Rs 29 to Rs 942 in Delhi. However, this revised price remains significantly subsidised and among the cheapest in the world when compared to neighbouring countries as well as advanced economies, the government said.

This is the second increase in recent months, following a Rs 60 hike on March 7, bringing the total rise to Rs 89 per cylinder.

Beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) will continue to pay an effective Rs 642 per cylinder for their first four annual refills after receiving a Rs 300 subsidy per refill via direct benefit transfer.

LPG cylinders loaded on delivery tricycles being transported amid price hike, in Nadia, West Bengal, on Sunday. PTI

The government has reduced the number of subsidised refills from nine to four per year.

State-run oil marketing companies (OMCs) were incurring losses of around Rs 703 per cylinder before the latest revision.

The cost of supplying a domestic LPG cylinder has now crossed Rs 1,600 amid rising global prices, the government said in a statement on Sunday.

India's LPG import costs are benchmarked to the Saudi Contract Price. The benchmark has risen about 46% since February following disruptions linked to the Strait of Hormuz.

Despite the changes, domestic LPG prices in India remain significantly lower than in neighbouring countries such as Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

The government highlighted that the commercial 19-kg LPG cylinder, used by hotels and restaurants, now sells at Rs 3,113.50 in Delhi (about Rs 164 per kg) after multiple increases. In contrast, households pay roughly Rs 66 per kg.

"The prices of petroleum products in India are linked to the corresponding prices in the international market. The government, however, continues to modulate the effective price to the consumer for domestic LPG," the statement said.

"What the household does not bear the brunt of is the several hundred rupees a cylinder which the government is bearing."

The government maintained uninterrupted LPG supplies despite the Strait of Hormuz disruptions, through which 54% of India's LPG imports pass. Domestic production was ramped up by over 60%, from 32,000 tonnes per day to 52,000 tonnes. Consumers were encouraged to switch to piped natural gas where available.

The Union Cabinet has approved Rs 30,000 crore in compensation to OMCs to partly offset these losses.

NCP fields Rajendra Jain for RS bypoll

MUMBAI, PTI: The NCP, led by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Pawar, has nominated senior party leader Rajendra Jain as its candidate for the June 18 Rajya Sabha bypoll, state NCP president Sunil Tatkare said on Sunday.

Announcing the party's decision, Tatkare said Jain was chosen unanimously after consultations within the party leadership.

Tatkare said Jain brings extensive legislative and organisational experience, having represented the Bhandara-Gondia Local Authorities constituency in the Legislative Council for 12 years. He said Jain has also worked for a long time in several cooperative institutions. Jain will file his nomination on Monday.

The bypoll was necessitated by the resignation of Sunetra Pawar, who joined the state government after the death of her husband and deputy CM Ajit Pawar in a plane crash in January.

Akhilesh seeks court probe into alleged missing Ram Temple donations

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday claimed that there were reports that crores of rupees, received as offerings at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, were "missing" and asked the court to take cognisance of the matter.

In a post on X, Akhilesh said, "It is very sensitive news for the devotees of Lord Rama in the world that crores received as donations at the Ram Temple have been found missing."

He also questioned the silence of the Ram Temple Trust and the state government on the issue.

"It is shameful for the Ram Temple Trust that no one is ready to come forward to explain... the court should take suo motu cognisance," Yadav said.

"The issue is directly concerned with the faith of the Sanatani society...the silence of the government is suspicious," he added.

People attend the 'Dhwajarohan' ceremony at the Ram Temple, in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh. PTI FILE

Reacting to the allegations, Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust General Secretary Champat Rai informed that internal audits are underway, and nothing has emerged from them so far.

"The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra undergoes internal audits from time to time. Representatives of the trust and the State Bank of India are involved in this exercise. The audit process lasts for several days. The same work is being carried out these days. Nothing noteworthy has come to light yet," he said in a statement.

Mahant Dinendra Das, a member of the trust, said any decision made by the government will be acceptable to them. "If there is any doubt, then conduct an inquiry."

According to sources, the public had donated more than Rs 3,000 crore for the construction of the Ram Temple till last year. The Ram Temple had recorded an annual income of Rs 327 crore in the financial year 2024-25.

(With PTI inputs)

Varanasi bans sale of meat, fish within city limits

LUCKNOW, DHNS: Apparently bowing to the demands by several saffron outfits, the Varanasi Municipal Corporation has decided to ban the sale of meat and fish inside the city, and to shift meat shops outside city limits.

According to local reports, the decision was taken at a corporators' meeting on Saturday, "keeping in view the religious significance of the town and the increasing flow of devotees".

A senior official said in Varanasi that five spots outside the city had been identified for the sale of meat and fish. These were Ramnagar, Sujabad, Ganeshpur, Avleshpur, and Shivpur.

"These places are outside the city limits, yet not very far... They have been selected to ensure that people do not face any difficulty," said the official.

Saffron outfits had been demanding a ban on the sale of meat, fish, and liquor in the temple town, and also organised protests on the issue. They hailed the decision, calling it a "historic step".

"It's a historic decision and will go a long way in restoring the religious sanctity of Kashi (old name of Varanasi)," said a leader of one of the outfits.

He said that he now expected the administration to ban the sale of liquor in the city as well.

UP officials more loyal to those in power than Constitution: HC

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

In a significant and stern observation on the administrative machinery in Uttar Pradesh, the Allahabad High Court has said that except a few, all officers were more loyal to the government than to the Constitution, as their transfers, selections, and promotions were based on political connections.

A single-judge bench of Justice Vinod Diwakar made the observation recently while quashing proceedings under the Gangsters' Act against a Ghaziabad family.

"UP has long reduced constitutional governance to an instrument of personal dominion rather than public service. The administrative machinery of the state has, over successive regimes, been susceptible to deep political penetration," the court said.

"This court has no hesitation in observing that transfers, postings, and promotions of officers have frequently been instruments of political patronage rather than merit-based governance, barring a few.

"Officers perceived as loyalists are rewarded with preferred postings while those demonstrating independence are transferred punitively to inconsequential assignments, a well-known fact," it added.

The HC said a systemic and deeply entrenched culture had emerged wherein a considerable section of the officer cadre treated the rule of law not as a constitutional obligation but as an operational inconvenience.

"The vertical loyalty of officers runs not toward the Constitution but toward the ruling dispensation. ...Encounter killings, selective crackdowns, and targeted use of the Gangsters Act against inconvenient individuals have periodically attracted judicial notice," it said.

DRUG BUSTS

Kerala's Op Toofan rains surprises: Ganja in rice and chutney

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

Kerala's ongoing anti-narcotics drive has seen a crackdown on drug peddlers with international links and unusual drug-concealment operations.

In one case, a young techie in Thiruvananthapuram was found cultivating cannabis plants in his bedroom, reportedly using them to make chutney and mix with milk. Another man was caught in Thrissur cooking cannabis with rice.

As part of 'Operation Toofan: The Narco Hunt' launched by the newly sworn-in Congress-led United Democratic Front government, around 750 drug-peddling cases have been registered and 795 accused arrested across the state.

Around 0.626 kg of MDMA, 0.14 kg of hashish oil and 48 kg of ganja have so far been seized, said Home Minister Ramesh Chennithala, who initiated the drive.

The techie, identified as Vishal from Haryana, claimed he was cultivating cannabis for personal use. He said he prepared chutney with tender leaves and consumed it with milk, claiming it was a traditional practice for health benefits.

In Kunnamkulam, Thrissur, a man identified as Bineesh was found cooking ganja with rice. A police raid at his house initially yielded nothing, but as the pressure cooker released steam, the smell of cannabis spread. A subsequent search revealed a pouch of ganja mixed with the rice inside the cooker.

Police suspect he tried to conceal the ganja in the rice, but the plan failed.

Meanwhile, foreign nationals involved in drug trafficking in Kerala were arrested from other states as part of the operation. A woman identified as Santhan Susane was held by Kerala Police in Bengaluru in connection with a case registered in Pathanamthitta. In another case, a Nigerian national, Samuel Chifson, was arrested in Delhi.

Migrant workers from Bengal held

Four migrant workers from West Bengal were arrested with 34 kg of ganja on Sunday. According to police, the accused brought the contraband from Odisha by train and reached Aluva before proceeding to Perumbavoor in two autorickshaws.

The ganja was procured in Odisha for around Rs 5,000 per kg and sold in Kerala for about Rs 30,000 per kg.

(With PTI inputs)

Man dies, one hospitalised after falling ill at Mumbai concert

MRTYUNJAY BOSE
MUMBAI, DHNS

A 28-year-old man died, and a 31-year-old woman was hospitalised after they reportedly fell ill during an all-night music concert at Worli in south Mumbai in the early hours of Sunday, prompting a police investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident.

The incident occurred during the 'Klangkuenstler All Night Long' electronic music event held at the Dome facility of the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Indoor Stadium, managed by the National Sports Club of India (NSCI).

According to police, the deceased suffered a medical emergency during the concert and was rushed to Breach Candy Hospital, where he was declared dead.

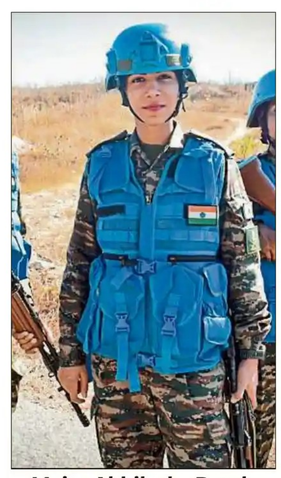
In a separate incident at the same event, the woman complained of ill health and was shifted to Jaslok Hospital. She is currently undergoing treatment.

Preliminary inquiries suggest that both had consumed alcohol during the event. The woman told investigators that she had consumed alcohol and energy drinks before falling ill. Police said no use of narcotic substances has so far come to light, though investigations are continuing.

The Tardeo police have registered an Accidental Death Report (ADR) and launched a detailed probe. Statements of event organisers, NSCI officials and other witnesses are being recorded. Police are also examining the CCTV footage from inside the venue and analysing electronic evidence.

"The police are investigating the matter. Those responsible, if any, will face strict action. No one will be spared," Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said.

In April this year, two MBA students who attended a music concert at the NESCO Exhibition Centre died allegedly due to drug overdose.


Major Abhilasha Barak, the Indian Army's first woman combat helicopter pilot, has been honoured with the UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award for her outreach work with women and girls while serving with the UN mission in Lebanon. PTI

No reneging once creditors okay resolution plan: Top court on bankruptcy

Says if such tricks are allowed to succeed, full bankruptcy code architecture will crumble

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court has ruled that once the Committee of Creditors (CoC) approves a resolution plan and issues a Letter of Intent (LoI), the successful resolution applicant (SRA) cannot negotiate further or withdraw from the plan, emphasising the binding and irrevocable nature of such approvals under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

A bench of Justices K V Vishwanathan and Vipul M Pancholi made the observation while dismissing an appeal by M/s Oracle Homes Textiles Limited Promoter and Director Sanjay Dave, against a National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) order of October 29, 2024.

Referring to Section 33 of the IBC and its explanation (introduced in 2019), the bench clarified that if an SRA reneged after initially gaining the CoC's trust, leading to liquidation, no fault could be found with the process.

The court also pulled up Dave, observing: "It was a clear subterfuge. Knowing fully well that one cannot withdraw directly from the plan approved by the CoC, an attempt was made in an indirect manner by harping on about certain stipulations as conditionalities... If such artifices are allowed to succeed, the entire architecture of the IBC would crumble."

Oracle Homes Textiles Limited, an MSME, underwent the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) after admission on August 9, 2018. Dave submitted a resolution plan with the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)'s permission. On May 10, 2021, the CoC approved his plan with an overwhelming 99.9% voting share.

An LoI was issued on May 23, 2021. However, Dave repeatedly delayed acceptance, characterising the LoI as "conditional".

Subsequent LoIs were issued on June 23 and July 23, 2021, but he failed to furnish the unconditional performance guarantee or formally accept the plan within the stipulated timelines.

The Resolution Professional eventually forfeited the Rs 1-crore earnest money deposit.

With no valid resolution plan in place, the CoC voted for liquidation of the corporate debtor on June 5, 2023, with 99.61% approval.

The NCLAT upheld the liquidation order and dismissed Dave's appeals.

Dismissing Dave's current appeal, the apex court held that the clauses mentioned in the LoI regarding pending litigations, underwriting risks, and staff-related issues did not render it conditional.

Bengal family travels 1,400 km, 'murders' DU prof over land row

NEW DELHI, PTI: A Delhi University assistant professor was murdered allegedly by a family from West Bengal over a long-running property dispute, with the police apprehending a married couple and their minor son, an official said on Sunday.

Debosmita Paul, an assistant professor at Shivaji College, was found dead in her flat at Satyam Apartments in East Delhi on June 3.

A police team flew to Bengal on June 6 and tracked them with clues from CCTV footage. The next day, they apprehended Ramprashad Das (42), who runs a sanitary shop in Burdwan, and his wife Banashree (36), a homemaker. Their minor son was apprehended under provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act.

Police said the accused family had been residing in Paul's ancestral property in Burdwan, West Bengal, since 2023, which had been allotted to her through a family settlement. "The victim had repeatedly asked them to vacate the premises, leading to a prolonged dispute," a senior police officer said.

According to police, the victim had sent a final warning to the family to vacate the property, after which they allegedly conspired to kill her and travelled to Delhi, almost 1,400 km, on June 3.

Police said the accused, who were known to the victim, gained entry into the sixth-floor apartment without resistance. Initial investigation pointed to the property dispute as the main motive behind the murder.

Debosmita had been living alone in the flat after separating from her husband in 2022.

The man who made Malayalis laugh and cry

Salim Kumar
(1969-2026)

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

National award-winning Malayalam actor Salim Kumar, who died on Saturday night at the age of 56, left behind a legacy of both comic and poignant characters. Kumar had been under treatment for liver ailments for some time and underwent a liver transplant in 2015.

Hundreds paid homage to the actor at his hometown, North Paravur near Kochi, on Sunday. His funeral was held with state honours at his residence, "Laughing Villa". He is survived by his wife, Sunitha, and his sons, Chandu and Aromal. Chandu is also an actor.

Apart from his contributions to cinema, Salim Kumar was fondly remembered for extending support to those affected by the 2018 floods. Many families were accommodated for days on the upper floors of his house.

Kumar, who entered films in the late 1990s from the mimicry stage, went on to act in around 250 movies, mostly in comic roles.

He delivered a host of evergreen dialogues and characters. His performances in the 2011 film 'Adaminte Makan Abu' (Abu, Son of Adam) and the 2006 film 'Achanurangatha Veedu' (The Home Where Father Doesn't Sleep) won him both national and state honours. He received the national award and the Kerala state award for best actor for 'Adaminte Makan Abu'.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his condolence message, said Salim Kumar had made a mark with his versatility and memorable performances across a wide range of roles.

Chief Minister VD Satheesan, who shared a personal bond with Kumar as both hailed from the same region, said he felt as though he had lost a sibling. Kumar was a Congress supporter and had campaigned for the party.

Four workers die after inhaling toxic fumes while cleaning tank in Gujarat

AHMEDABAD, DHNS: Four workers were killed, allegedly after inhaling toxic fumes, while they were cleaning an Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) tank at a jewellery manufacturing unit in Surat on Sunday.

The police said the incident occurred on Sunday morning when a group of workers, including their supervisor, entered the tank to clean it. Primary investigations suggested that none of the workers had any safety gear.

"The tank belongs to an industrial unit, Rati Jewellers, which operates an ETP. It is used to collect waste generated during the jewellery manufacturing process. The workers had been assigned to clean the tank as part of routine maintenance. Upon reaching the spot, we found that the workers had fallen unconscious. Our team pulled them out and rushed them to the hospital, where they were declared dead on arrival," a fire official said.

He also added that the workers were not wearing any safety gear that could have saved them. While a case of accidental death has been registered, police said that further action will be taken after the post-mortem report.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

IT'S SOOO GOOD TO BE HOME
STOP! NEW SECURITY CHECK: BEFORE YOU COME IN, YOU HAVE TO PROVE YOU'RE NOT A ROBOT
HOW'S THIS?
KISS
I GUESS THAT PROVES IT!
...AND THIS YANKEE POT ROAST PASSES MY TASTE BUDS' SECURITY CHECK!

Hagar The Horrible

I ACCIDENTALLY SERVED PSYCHEDELIC MUSHROOMS LAST NIGHT!
I KNOW...WHEN I ATE THEM THE TREES SPOKE TO ME!
WHAT WISDOM DID YOU HEAR?
CHEW WITH YOUR MOUTH CLOSED!

Beetle Bailey

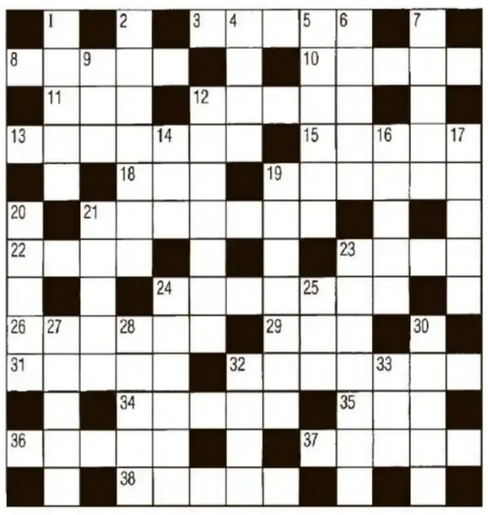
BACK ALREADY? I TOLD YOU THAT PLACE WAS BORING
NOT AT ALL. THERE'S A BIG BRAWL
REALLY?!
ROCKY HATES TO MISS A GOOD BAR FIGHT
GREG + MORT WALKER

Peanuts

Marvin

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12433

CRYPTIC



ACROSS
3 Accommodation of interest to key players (5)
8 Chopin piece, the ìInvitation to Rideî? (3,2)
10 Entertainment logical in the X-ray dept.? (5)
11 The little boy embraced by more girls (3)
12 Catch the name of a varnish (5)
13 Like those old comedians that never die? (5,2)
15 They take turns to provide transport two ways (5)
18 Rest? Yes, on Tuesday! (3)
19 Wildly amused by a Gorgon (6)
21 In name, minister participating in loan arrangement (7)
22 Narrow lane, maybe (4)
23 Do a multi-purpose repair? (4)
24 To fine leg? (7)
26 Was he shoved aboard? (6)
29 Pop in a good advert (3)
31 A note, true in each case (5)
32 Once more weary, went to bed (7)
34 The attendant rushed endlessly around (5)
35 Might its driver give citizens advice? (3)
36 She's one to eat out (5)
37 Though two-faced, was worshipped (5)
38 Only half the tree is wood? Rubbish! (5)

DOWN
1 The value of a letter or two (5)
2 Joins in an endless singsong, possibly? (5,2)
4 A well rounded line (4)
5 A tip-top composer will go far (6)
6 Sarah, nowadays, is a dish! (5)
7 Inspires with a blazing determination (5)
9 Being green is not exactly sweet (3)
12 It's dead skinny! (7)
14 Figure I'm not very bright (3)
16 Destroyed by a little fellow touring the kingdom (5)
17 Like a Scottish shore? (5)
19 Go idly, as a master, to an inferior position (7)
20 World of the theatre? (5)
21 Wild crane of pearly appearance (5)
23 Inaccurately claimed to be curative (7)
24 Source of hot water and an internal treatment for eyes (6)
25 Part of the Yucatan fauna (3)
27 Advice not to be ardent about love (5)
28 Sound but undersized specimen with a pig's tail (5)
30 Prove you can't go up by tube to the air terminal (5)
32 Snooker players don't see them as colours (4)
33 Managed a career (3)

ACROSS
3 Iron clothes (5)
8 Wooden peg (5)
10 Jewelled ornamental band (5)
11 Decompose (3)
12 Vital organ (5)
13 Inorganic matter (7)
15 Keen (5)
18 Groove (3)
19 Of the sea (6)
21 A holy place (7)
22 Flat (4)
23 Plan or contrive secretly (4)
24 Scoffs at (7)
26 Final result (6)
29 Toothed wheel (3)
31 Lustre (5)
32 Principal bullfighter (7)
34 Tag (5)
35 Total (3)
36 So far (2,3)
37 Naked figures (5)
38 Requirements (5)

DOWN
1 Boy's name (5)
2 Old soldier (7)
4 Spool (4)
5 Small river (6)
6 Indian stringed instrument (5)
7 Clean feathers (5)
9 Was victorious (3)
12 Short axe (7)
14 Manage (3)
16 Lasses (5)
17 Puts one's feet up (5)
19 Melodious (7)
20 Planet (5)
21 Perceive (5)
23 Mythical winged horse (7)
24 Give to charity (6)
25 Speck (3)
27 Stage (5)
28 Girl's name (5)
30 Curved roofs (5)
32 Fix (4)
33 Squib (3)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 2683

ACROSS: 1 Choice, 4 Dead loss, 9 Litany, 10 Pristine, 12 Presence, 13 Tunnel, 15 Opal, 16 Run to earth, 19 Walk of life, 20 Snub, 23 Outlay, 25 Renegade, 27 Implicit, 28 Bedeck, 29 Gadgetry, 30 Gallop.

DOWN: 1 Calypso, 2 On the nail, 3 Conger, 5 Earn, 6 Disquiet, 7 Onion, 8 Stealth, 11 Scruple, 14 Stifled, 17 Ring a bell, 18 Bona fide, 19 Wyoming, 21 Break-up, 22 Geneva, 24 Tepid, 26 Pier.

◆ SU-DO-KU-6926 ◆

	7	6		1	4			
8					7		9	
		9	2					
	9			4		7		
1	3						4	9
		4		8			1	
					5	6		
	2		4					8
			3	9		1	5	

easy

SOLUTION TO 6925

6	8	3	5	9	2	1	4	7
7	5	9	4	3	1	2	6	8
1	2	4	8	6	7	9	5	3
5	1	8	7	2	3	4	9	6
9	3	2	6	4	5	7	8	1
4	7	6	1	8	9	3	2	5
8	6	1	9	7	4	5	3	2
2	9	7	3	5	8	6	1	4
3	4	5	2	1	6	8	7	9

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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E1 I1 P3 T1 C3 H4 S1	5th Letter Triple	RACK 1
I1 I1 S1 D2 W4 P3 E1		RACK 2
A1 E1 K5 D2 S1 T1 L1	Double Word Score	RACK 3
U1 I1 I1 T1 N1 P3 S1	3rd Letter Double	RACK 4

PAR SCORE 110-120
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

SATURDAY'S SOLUTION

M3 A1 R1 M3 O1 T1	RACK 1 =	30
R1 E1 C3 O1 I1 L1 S1	RACK 2 =	59
P3 L1 U1 M3 P3 E1 R1	RACK 3 =	76
N1 I1 P3 P3 E1 R1	RACK 4 =	13
M3 U1 S1 T1 A1 N1 G2	RACK 5 =	60
PAR SCORE 155-165	JUDD'S TOTAL	238

JUMBLE®

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TRECS

CIENW

DMSEOT

KRARDE

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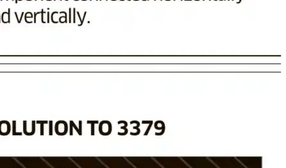
We will release the coin to celebrate Lincoln's 100th birthday.
That's just perfect timing.
1909
1¢
11/26
THE U.S. MINT DEBUTED THE LINCOLN PENNY ON THE CENTENNIAL OF HIS BIRTH BECAUSE ---

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

( ) ( ) " ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) "

(Answers Tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: EMCEE DITTO OUTAGE FOSSIL
Answer: Until their new house was built there, the vacant lot was a — "SITE" TO SEE

HITORI-3380

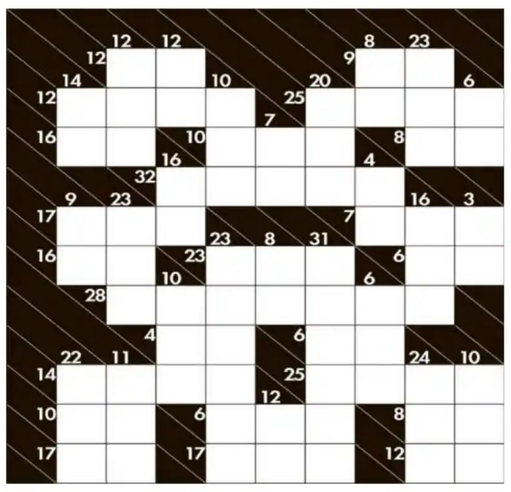
3	5	1	6	5	4	4	6
5	1	5	8	8	3	7	4
5	7	5	4	2	8	3	8
1	4	5	5	7	3	2	6
7	8	4	1	8	2	5	5
6	8	7	5	4	5	5	5
8	6	8	2	5	5	1	3
4	5	8	3	6	1	5	8

SOLUTION TO 3379

3	6	5	■	8	2	4	■
4	5	6	8	■	7	■	2
■	3	■	5	4	1	7	8
2	■	4	3	■	5	1	7
5	8	7	1	2	■	3	■
8	■	3	■	7	4	■	5
■	7	1	6	5	■	2	4
7	4	2	■	3	6	5	■

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3380



SOLUTION TO 3379

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

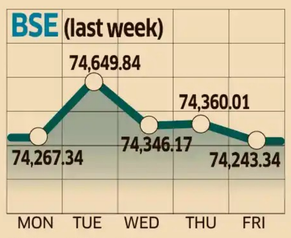
SU DO KU X - 3940

■					3			■
	■			4			■	
		■			6	9		3
		5	4		■			
		8		■				
			■		1		3	
	5	7				■	6	
	■		3	2		4	5	
■	9						8	■

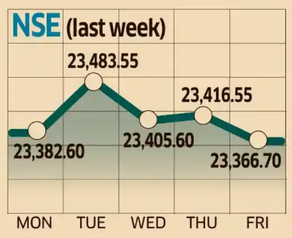
SOLUTION TO 3939

7	4	2	6	5	3	1	8	9
5	3	1	2	9	8	4	6	7
8	9	6	1	4	7	5	3	2
9	2	8	5	7	4	6	1	3
1	5	3	9	2	6	8	7	4
6	7	4	8	3	1	2	9	5
4	8	7	3	6	2	9	5	1
2	1	5	7	8	9	3	4	6
3	6	9	4	1	5	7	2	8

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.



*Data as of June 5



TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
TITAN	4.55%	NTPC	-6.49%
INFY	3.21%	ULTRACEMCO	-4.70%
ETERNAL	2.21%	BAJAJFINSV	-4.57%
INDIGO	1.65%	LT	-3.01%
SBIN	1.43%	HCLTECH	-2.52%

TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
ONGC	10.96%	ADANIENT	-18.12%
TATACONSUM	6.33%	TMPV	-14.48%
POWERGRID	5.42%	CIPLA	-7.76%
HINDUUNILVR	5.04%	HINDALCO	-7.57%
ITC	4.81%	WIPRO	-7.19%

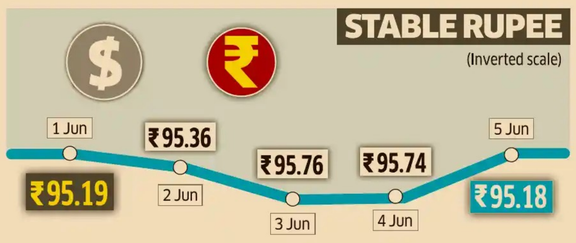
Sensex (52-week)

Jun 5, 2025	Jun 5, 2026	
81,442.04	74,243.34	-8.84%

Nifty (52-week)

Jun 5, 2025	Jun 5, 2026	
24,750.90	23,366.70	-5.59%

10-year Bond yield 6.97%



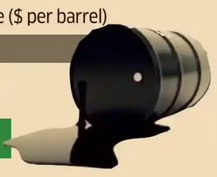
Exchange Rates*

Dollar	₹ 95.18	SGD	₹ 73.59
Pound	₹ 128.10	Yen (100 units)	₹ 59.64
Euro	₹ 110.83		

*Price at which banks sell

Crude Oil Rate ($ per barrel)

BRENT CRUDE
$93.09*
-2.04%
*Rate as of Jun 5



Bengaluru fuel pump price*

(Retail)

Petrol*	₹110.89	₹ -0.08%
Diesel*	₹98.80	₹ -0.07%

*Rates as of Jun 6 #Rate change compared with yesterday

Commodity watch

COFFEE

Category	Rate (Rs per 50 kg)*
Arabica Parchment	₹ 22300 - 22800
Arabica Cherry	₹ 12750 - 14250
Robusta Parchment	₹ 17500 - 18200
Robusta Cherry	₹ 9300 - 10000

*Rates as on Jun 4

Other Commodities

Silkworm cocoon (Rs per kg)*

Bivoltine (BV)	₹ 683
Cross Breed (CB)	₹ 611

*Average rates as on Jun 5

India eyes strategic Baltic gateway through Lithuania's Klaipeda Port

SUMIT PANDE
KLAIPEDA (LITHUANIA), DHNS

Three Indian operators have been in discussions for the expansion and development of an all-weather deep-sea Baltic port that could provide India strategic access to Central Europe and the Nordic nations for cargo volume movement.

The Indian strategic partners in discussions include Adani Group, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) and Mumbai Port Authority (MPA), regarding potential participation.

Klaipeda Port, managed by the Lithuanian State Seaport Authority, is planning to announce an international tender for the operator to carry out the development of Southport expansion, which would entail an investment of 1.4 billion euros.

Klaipeda is the largest Baltic port, which last year, handled close to 40 MMT of cargo and over 400,000 passengers. "Cooperation with the Port of Klaipeda offers significant advantages for Indian manufacturers, trading companies, freight forwarders, logistics providers, and other maritime stakeholders seeking access to the Baltic and Northern European markets," says Algis Latakas, Director General of the port.

Klaipeda Port and the JNPA signed an MoU on October 30, 2025, establishing a framework for future collaboration. Further discussion of the Indian players' participation may take place in October this year, when a delegation from Klaipeda Port visits New Delhi to participate in an event on European Connectivity.

"The event will provide an opportunity to meet again with representatives of the Adani Group, JNPA and MPA and other stakeholders to update on the project's progress and further explore potential areas of cooperation," Latakas says.

India and the EU concluded the historic FTA earlier this year, which aims to eliminate tariffs on 90% of traded goods. The agreement is currently being legally vetted and may come into effect next year upon ratification by the EU Parliament and Council.

The pact would be the gateway for Indian products to reach over 2 million consumers in the Baltic region, Central Europe, and Nordic nations.

Klaipeda could also play a crucial role in the development of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), first announced at the G20 summit in New Delhi in September 2023. IMEC is a transnational economic corridor designed to evolve an inter-regional trade route between India and the EU through West Asia.

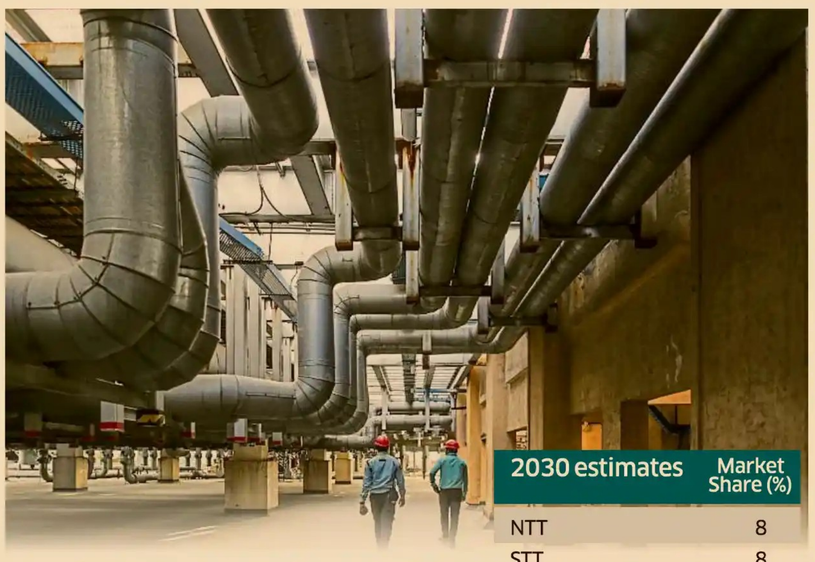
Coupled with the Baltic-Black Sea-Aegean Corridor (BBA), which originates in Greece, the IMEC could provide dovetail with the key European geo-economic axis, offering India both trade and strategic depth to both Europe and the Trans-Atlantic nations.

(The journalist was in Klaipeda at the invitation of the Lithuanian Government)

Hidden AI India winners add $48 billion on data centre boom

Old-economy industrial firms have transformed into India's hottest market play

BLOOMBERG



Industrial chiller at Yotta Data Services ATA Center, in Navi Mumbai.

India's data centre market poised for new entrants

2025	Market Share (%)
NTT	20
STT	16
Ctrl S	17
Sify	13
Nxtra (Airtel)	17
Others	17

2030 estimates	Market Share (%)
NTT	8
STT	8
Ctrl S	8
Sify	8
Nxtra (Airtel)	10
Yotta	8
AdaniConnex	10
Reliance	10
TCS	8
Princeton Digital Group	7
Blackstone	6
Others	9

Source: Nomura Research/Bloomberg

The overarching narrative is that Indian equity markets missed out on the global AI boom. But a look under the hood reveals a slew of smaller firms winning from trillions of dollars being spent on AI capacity.

The poster child for this rally is Sterlite Technologies Ltd, the optical-fiber maker owned by the Vedanta Group which has surged 500% this year. It got a $1.1 billion multi-year contract from a US-based hyperscaler last month. Its competitor, HFCL Ltd, has jumped 176%, while MTAR Technologies Ltd, which makes precision cooling and power components, has more than trebled.

An equal-weighted *Bloomberg* index of 28 Indian companies that feed the data-center ecosystem — from makers of transformers, switchgear, wires to cables and cooling systems — has added about $48 billion in combined market value this year, a rise of nearly 45%. The benchmark NSE Nifty 500, meanwhile, has lost over $300 billion in 2026.

Since every AI query runs through power-hungry data centres which require immense electricity and cooling, old-economy industrial firms have transformed into India's hottest market play. In Mumbai dealing rooms, it's called the 'AI capex trade'.

"We may be on the wrong end of the AI trade, but we could be on the right side of the AI capex trade," said R Sivakumar, Chief Investment Officer at Axis Mutual Fund. "One could consider companies benefiting from data centres and the entire value-chain associated with this capex."

Amazon.com Inc plans to invest $12.7 billion in cloud infrastructure in India through 2030, while Alphabet Inc is spending about $15 billion on an AI infrastructure hub in Visakhapatnam.

A Reliance Industries Ltd joint venture signed an $11 billion pact to build local data centres last year, while AdaniConnex has partnerships with Google as well as Uber Technologies Inc to help build their data centres.

'Picks and Shovels'

"The most-attractive exposure is in the industrial supply chain — the 'picks and shovels' that build, power, and cool these facilities," Nomura Holdings Inc analysts led by Akash Gupta wrote in a June 2 report. Also, a two-to-four year lead time in supplying some components has "created an enviable seller's market with multi-year backlogs", Nomura analysts wrote, adding that orders secured now will bring revenue between 2027 and 2029.

Foreign investors are already piling in. Shareholding of foreign funds in industrials rose to 14% as of March-end, the highest in two years, according to Elara Capital (India), even as global funds remain record sellers of Indian stocks.

On a top-down basis, India is one of the worst-performing markets globally as it lacks pure-play AI firms and semiconductor makers that are turbocharging Taiwanese and South Korean equities.

But the global obsession with GenAI is boosting those that keep these hyperscalers running, such as Hitachi Energy India Ltd, ABB India Ltd and Cummins India Ltd.

The runaway rallies of these below-the-radar beneficiaries are largely invisible in headline numbers, as many of them — Sterlite and MTAR for instance — remain excluded from the broadest domestic indexes.

"The rally in companies like Sterlite and MTAR is driven by the market's growing conviction that AI is creating a multi-year infrastructure capex cycle, not just a software opportunity," according to Angel One.

Total investments in global hyperscale data centres are likely to exceed $1.2 trillion between 2025 and 2027, estimates Angel One. This will also expand the customer base for these equipment manufacturers. Mahesh Viswanathan, CEO of Finolex Cables Ltd, said in an earnings call last month that this was "the right time to be in this industry". Finolex's shares have surged 40% this year.

The market is rewarding companies with visible AI-linked earnings rather than just thematic exposure, according to Angel One. Also, the biggest near-term risk is valuation as share rallies have left "no room for execution disappointments", the brokerage added.

China curbs

For instance, Anant Raj Ltd, the only listed pure-play data centre firm, has gained just about 4% this year. Meanwhile, Sterlite is trading at about 66 times its 12-month forward earnings, compared to NSE 500's 20 times. Some of the regional heavyweights have already seen a sell-off.

Data centres in India are "a real, long-term story" but another thing to watch out for is the policy stance on Chinese firms, according to Sonam Srivastava, founder of portfolio management firm Mumbai-based Wright Research. "If restrictions on Chinese equipment firms are relaxed, we could see sharp corrections as we saw back in January," she said.

No market watcher, however, is downplaying this opportunity.

"Data centre capex has emerged as the single largest contemporary industrial investment cycle," Nomura analysts wrote. It's "larger than the global wireless 4G rollout, the post-2008 LNG build-out, or the early-2010s shale boom".

Tata Motors to keep investing in electric, hydrogen-based tech

Chairman says geopolitical and uneven economic recovery are adding further complexity

NEW DELHI, PTI

N Chandrasekaran

Tata Motors will keep on investing in electric and hydrogen-based technologies for commercial vehicles, Chairman N Chandrasekaran said, emphasising that the transition to cleaner mobility requires a portfolio of electric, hydrogen and cleaner Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) technologies.

In his address to shareholders in the company's annual report for 2025-26, the chairman noted that advances in digital technologies and AI are transforming how mobility products are designed, experienced and supported.

Chandrasekaran, who is also the chairman of Tata Sons, observed that the transition to clean energy, heightened expectations on safety and reconfiguration of global supply chains are redefining competitiveness.

Geopolitical and uneven economic recovery are adding further complexity, making agility and resilience as critical capabilities, he added.

"The transition to cleaner mobility requires a portfolio of electric, hydrogen and cleaner ICE technologies. While we scale the portfolio of zero-emission electric CVs, we will continue to invest in hydrogen-based technologies for heavier-duty segments," he stated.

The Tata Motors chairman expressed confidence that the company is well-positioned to sustain its profitable growth journey, supported by a strong balance sheet, improving returns and focus on resilience.

"Our focus will remain on delivering industry-leading growth, profitability and returns, supported by a disciplined capital allocation to address emerging mobility trends," Chandrasekaran said.

According to him, the trends include digital-led solutions, connected vehicle technologies, advanced driver assistance systems, data-driven fleet services and new-age powertrains — capabilities that will shape the future of safe, efficient and intelligent commercial mobility.

"During the year (2025-26), your company recorded its highest-ever revenues of Rs 83,855 crore, compared to Rs 76,359 crore in FY25, delivering a robust year-on-year growth of 9.8%," Chandrasekaran said in the letter.

Profitability strengthened further, with the automotive business delivering a return on capital employed of 72.3%, among the highest in the global commercial vehicles industry, he informed shareholders.

Govt likely to sell 2% stake in Hindustan Zinc

BLOOMBERG: India is considering selling as much as a 2% stake in Hindustan Zinc Ltd. in a transaction that could raise up to Rs 5,000 crore ($525 million), according to people familiar with the matter.

The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management, which is under the Finance Ministry, aims to launch the process this month or in July, the people said, asking not to be identified because the information is private. ICICI Securities Ltd., Axis Capital Ltd., IIFL Capital Services Ltd. and HDFC Securities Ltd. are advising the government on the transaction, the people said.

Deliberations are ongoing and details of the offering, including its timing and size, could still change, the people said. Representatives for DIPAM, Hindustan Zinc and the banks didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

The government has stepped up efforts to boost revenue from selling stakes in state-owned assets. Last week, it raised about $531 million from the sale of a 2% stake in Coal India Ltd., the country's largest coal producer.

Earlier this week, India raised $450 million by selling a 6% stake in NHPC Ltd. It's also planning an offering of a 2% stake in Life Insurance Corporation of India that could raise as much as Rs 10,000 crore ($1 billion), people familiar with the matter have said.

The government last sold a 1.6% stake in Hindustan Zinc in November, raising about Rs 3,500 crore. The shares were priced at Rs 505 each. Since then, the stock has gained about 24%, increasing the value of the remaining holding.

DH INTERVIEW

'Significant amount of shadow AI is already emerging within enterprises'

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

The level of AI literacy in India almost mirrors what we see in more developed countries. Stating that AI is going wrong for many users, **Sandeep Bhambure**, Vice-President and Managing Director — India & SAARC, Veeam Software, tells *DH*'s **Uma Kannan** that data trust is becoming a very serious issue when it comes to AI in a candid interview. *Edited excerpts:*

Almost every company today is deploying multiple AI agents. AI cybersecurity has become critical. What are the most common concerns you hear from enterprises?

Traditionally, security has been built around protecting data and safeguarding IT systems from human threats. However, when we talk about AI, the biggest threat to it can come from the AI agents themselves. AI agents operate at machine-speed. This requires a completely new approach centered around data-centric security. Every bit of data across the enterprise should be visible and organisations need the capability to achieve that visibility. At the same time, as hundreds of AI agents are being created by both IT teams and users, organisations must establish guardrails and governance around them. A significant amount of shadow AI is already emerging within enterprises. Autonomous entities are now outnumbering humans in enterprises at a ratio of 82:1. These agents are growing at a pace of 44% over last year. We are looking at a proliferation of shadow AI. It follows its own set of rules and is not governed. Enterprises are unable to unleash the full power of AI due to the lack of trust, governance models and guardrails for AI infrastructure.

What exactly are stopping firms from rolling out AI projects?

About 90% of AI projects fail because the data feeding these AI systems cannot be trusted. Most of the data feeding AI is unstructured. In fact, 90% of the data universe is unstructured.

Data hallucination, data poisoning and toxic combinations of data access are all real-life problems. These challenges are stopping organisations from rolling out AI projects in production at a large scale across the enterprise. Investments in AI-related projects are reaching billions and even trillions of dollars. India alone is expected to see investments of over $200 billion in AI over the next couple of years. However, the investment going into building trust for AI and data trust is minuscule. It is almost close to nil. While 95% of companies are either implementing AI or evaluating it for their environments, only 15% feel that they have the relevant infrastructure, confidence and trust in the underlying layer required to roll out AI at scale. These are the challenges the industry is facing. This is when we identified that the entire AI stack has a missing layer, the data and AI trust layer.

In your conversations with clients, do they discuss AI trust or do you still feel there isn't much awareness about it?

Sandeep Bhambure

Initially, there wasn't much awareness, but even during the pilot phase, customers experienced difficulties and challenges because of data trust issues. More than 50% of CIOs or decision-makers have taken decisions based on poisoned or hallucinated data. AI is going wrong for many users. Data trust is becoming a very serious issue.

We believe that we are in a unique position to define what data security and AI trust mean.

The level of AI literacy in India is almost mirroring what we see in more developed countries. We are not lagging anywhere. There is significant interest within the Indian IT fraternity around AI. Organisations have already started experimenting with AI, creating their own agents and exploring different use-cases. We are at par with global markets. In addition, the DPDP (Digital Personal Data Protection) compliance angle is adding momentum to data and AI trust initiatives. Organisations looking to comply with DPDP need clean and trustworthy data with contextual intelligence. This is also the same data-feeding AI projects. The market is set to accelerate not only from the AI adoption standpoint, but also from the perspective of data and AI trust, driven by both AI requirements and compliance needs.

What is the market size and opportunity right now?

From Veeam's standpoint, we are a $2.1 billion company with more than half-a-million customers globally. Veeam operates in the global data resilience and protection market, which represents an estimated $11.8-12 billion industry. We also hold the no. 1 worldwide market share in data protection software at 13.6%. India is one of the fastest-growing regions for Veeam globally. We have thousands of customers in India, ranging from some of the largest enterprises across financial services, IT services, manufacturing, airlines, healthcare and several other sectors, to smaller organisations that have adopted Veeam from a data-resilience standpoint. The conversation around AI, data, and AI trust is becoming even more exciting. As awareness increases, we are seeing more customers invest in data and AI trust to support and accelerate their AI ambitions.

What initiatives or skilling programmes are you building for cyber talent?

India currently requires nearly 500,000 skilled professionals in cyber resilience. However, only around 200,000 professionals graduate through engineering, management and industry certification pathways combined. This creates a significant talent gap. Through various initiatives, we are committed to building a pool of more than 100,000 cyber resilience-skilled professionals. By partnering with universities and colleges across the country, we aim to create over 25,000 job pathways. Our collaborations with educational institutions involve introducing cyber resilience into the curriculum, conducting train-the-trainer programmes and supporting campus recruitment initiatives.

Receiving dividend? Know its tax implications

The Indian corporate sector is entering a crucial period of the calendar year, June through September. During this period, listed and unlisted companies will hold their Board Meetings and Annual General Meetings to approve and adopt financials and declare final dividends for the financial year ended March 2026. For instance, Infosys Limited's Board of Directors recommended the final dividend of Rs 25 per equity share in its meeting on April 23, 2026. Subsequently, it issued mandatory newspaper advertisements stating its upcoming AGM date, the submission of tax forms, record date, final dividend, and other related issues. Let us look at the tax implications on dividend recipients, along with other changes:

In simple terms, dividend is an equitable share of surplus profits among a group of people. It is a payout made by a company to its shareholders from its profits or accumulated earnings. Sources of dividends can be a domestic or foreign company equity, mutual funds, GDRs, and REITs/InVITs. Based on timing, interim, declared during the financial year and final one, after the relevant financial year ended.

Tax on Dividend: Resident shareholders

Income by way of dividend received on or after April 1, 2020, is taxable in the hands of shareholders under the head 'Income from other sources'. Since the company was liable to pay 'Dividend Distribution Tax' or 'DDT' known then, shareholders were exempted from paying tax. Now, though there is no different tax treatment, dividend income is just taxable at the applicable tax rates.

As per the Income Tax Act, 2025, the dividend-distributing company is obligated to deduct applicable taxes at the time of making the payment of the final dividend itself, in the form of TDS. For resident shareholders, the prevailing rate of TDS is 10%, provided he/she has submitted an active PAN, and 20% if not provided or having it. Even those whose PAN is invalid/inoperative will attract a higher rate of TDS.

As an exception, no TDS shall be deducted under two circumstances. They are, if the total dividend to be received by a shareholder during the tax year 2026-27 does not exceed Rs 10,000. Secondly, if a shareholder had submitted a duly-filled self-declaration in Form 121, replaced with the erstwhile Form 15G and Form 15H, due to his/her estimated total income for the tax year 2026-27 likely to be 'nil' and 'does not want' tax to be deducted.

PRABHAKAR K S
FOUNDER & CEO,
SHREE TAX CHAMBERS

In addition, advance tax provisions will also be applicable if the total tax liability of the taxpayer is more than Rs 10,000 in a given financial year.

Tax on Dividend: Non-Resident shareholders

In the case of non-resident shareholders, dividend receipts are subject to the withholding tax at 20%-plus-applicable surcharge and cess. However, he/she may explore if his/her home country has a tax treaty arrangement with the Indian government to avail tax treaty benefits, if any. For instance, India-Germany's double taxation avoidance agreement allows for a lower TDS on dividend income. Thus, a German resident holding Infosys shares can avail the said tax benefit at 10%, instead of 20%. The Income Tax Act, 2025 (the erstwhile Income Tax Act, 1961) has authorised the Centre to enter into such arrangements with other tax jurisdictions.

As of 2025, India has active 90-plus tax treaties on income and capital. The key objectives are to grant tax relief, prevent tax avoidance and evasion, avail tax credit in the home country or vice-versa, and others.

If a non-resident shareholder does not possess PAN, he/she is required to submit a bunch of declarations and information mandated by the Income Tax Act, 2025, the Income Tax Rules, 2026, and respective DTAA/MLI, including a copy of the tax residency certificate for the tax year 2026-27 obtained from his/her home country's tax authorities, duly filled Form 41 for availing tax treaty benefit obtained from the Indian tax authorities through online, self-declarations of having no permanent establishment (PE) in India, beneficial ownership of equity shares, and fulfilling all conditions of applicable tax treaty to claim benefit.

Union Budget 2026

A shareholder was allowed to claim interest expenditure from dividend income up to 20% of the total dividend income till March 31, 2026. The Union Budget presented last February has removed that benefit, and the gross dividend amount received will be taxable with effect from April 1, 2026.

Due to constant changes in tax, legal and regulatory aspects, a shareholder is not only expected to keep abreast of all those changes, but also to strictly adhere to them.

TOP PICKS

The data is sourced from Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited

Shriram Finance (ID: SHRIRAMFIN) — BUY
Upside +27%** | Last close ₹923 | Target: ₹1,175*

Cummins India (ID: CUMMINSIND) — BUY
Upside +14%** | Last close ₹5,794 | Target: ₹6,600*

Tata Steel (ID: TATASTEEL) — BUY
Upside +21%** | Last close ₹207 | Target: ₹250*

Lenskart (ID: LENSKART) — BUY
Upside +28%** | Last close ₹507 | Target: ₹650*

Groww (ID: GROWW) — BUY
Upside +20%** | Last close ₹196 | Target: ₹235*

* Target price has been calculated on the basis of fundamentals ** Upside refers to more value stock is expected to generate than its current price

FPIs pull out Rs 43k crore in first week of June

AI trade, rupee weakness weigh on Indian equities

NEW DELHI, PTI

Foreign investors continued to pare their exposure to Indian equities, pulling out nearly Rs 43,000 crore in the first week of June amid a shift of global capital towards technology and artificial intelligence (AI)-linked opportunities overseas and persistent weakness in the rupee.

With this, total outflows by Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) from Indian equities have reached Rs 2.67 lakh crore so far in 2026, surpassing the Rs 1.66 lakh crore withdrawn during the whole of 2025, according to data available with the National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL).

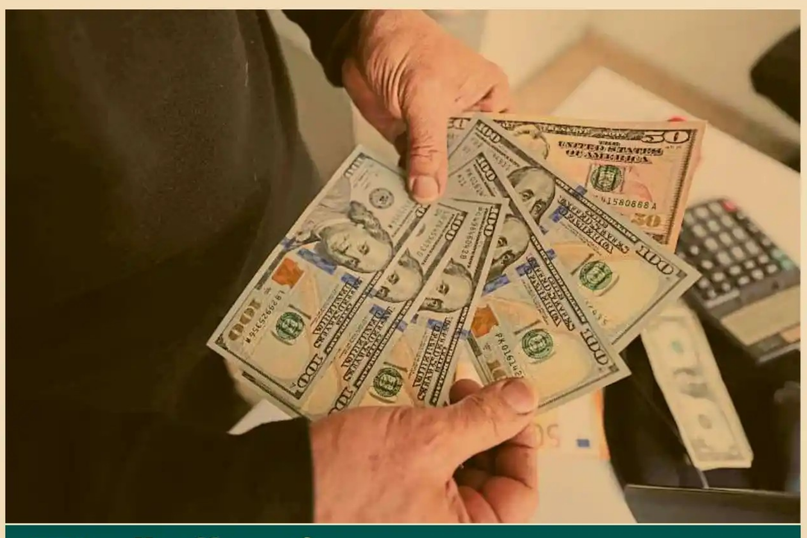
Market experts said FPIs have been reducing their exposure to Indian equities due to a combination of weak earnings growth, rupee depreciation and the emergence of more attractive investment opportunities in global markets, particularly in the technology and AI space.

"Apart from higher US yields and dollar strength, global investors are also reallocating capital towards some of the largest technology and AI-related public market opportunities currently emerging globally.

The upcoming SpaceX IPO, along with anticipated capital market activity around leading AI companies, is attracting significant global liquidity, leading to temporary capital rotation away from emerging markets, including India," Alpha AMC Founder Rajesh Singla said.

According to the data, FPIs were net sellers in all months of 2026 except February. They pulled out Rs 35,962 crore in January before turning net buyers in February, when they invested Rs 22,615 crore, the highest monthly inflow in 17 months.

However, the trend reversed sharply in March, when foreign investors withdrew a record Rs 1.17 lakh crore. The selling continued in April with net outflows of Rs 60,847 crore and in May with withdrawals of Rs 32,963 crore. The exodus persisted in June, with FPIs pulling out Rs 42,927 crore during the first week of the month.



FPI sell-off continues

₹42,927 cr outflow
FPIs pulled out nearly **Rs 43,000 crore** from Indian equities in the first week of June

₹2.67 lakh cr exit in 2026
Total FPI outflows this year have already surpassed 2025's full-year withdrawal of **Rs 1.66 lakh crore**

Why FPIs are selling
Weak earnings growth, rupee depreciation, and a shift towards global AI and tech investment opportunities

Rupee under pressure
Indian currency has weakened nearly **6%** in 2026, falling to around **Rs 95.5** per US dollar

Debt still attracting flows
FPIs invested over **Rs 17,230 crore** in government debt via FAR route so far this year

Market experts said that persistent depreciation of the rupee has emerged as another key factor behind the sustained outflows.

The Indian currency has weakened nearly 6% so far in 2026 and around 10% over the past year, falling from the mid-80s to about 95.5 against the US dollar despite efforts by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to stabilise the currency.

Given the importance of foreign portfolio flows in financing the current account deficit and supporting the balance of payments, policymakers have announced a series of measures aimed at attracting overseas capital.

Geojit Investments Chief Investment Strategist V K Vijayakumar said the government's decision to exempt interest and capital gains arising from FPI investments in government securities from taxation, along with recent RBI measures, could support fresh foreign inflows.

These measures include the central bank absorbing hedging costs on Foreign Currency Non-Resident (FCNR) deposits mobilised by commercial banks, expanding the forex swap window, increasing access to government bonds through the Fully Accessible Route (FAR), and raising investment limits for non-resident Indians (NRIs) and overseas citizens of India (OCIs) in Indian equities.

However, Vijayakumar said a sustained revival in FPI inflows would depend on a moderation in the global AI-driven investment theme, which has been drawing capital away from emerging markets, including India.

"There are early signs of this happening. The sharp decline in the Nasdaq on June 5 indicates that the AI trade may be losing momentum. If the AI-driven rally cools and reverses, it could trigger a reversal in FPI outflows from India," he added.

On the country, FPIs invested over Rs 2,600 crore in debt through the Fully Accessible Route in the first week of June, taking the total to Rs 17,230 crore in this year so far.

WEEK AHEAD

Equities may trade in broader range

Stock- and sector-specific developments to drive market performance

SIDDHARTHA KHEMKA
BENGALURU, DHNS

Indian equities are expected to trade in a broader range this week amid a mixed global and domestic backdrop, with market performance likely to be driven by stock- and sector-specific developments. While the Reserve Bank of India's measures to attract foreign capital and the government's tax relief for foreign investors in government securities may support sentiment, we expect market performance likely to be driven by bottom-up stock and sector-specific action in the near term. We continue to prefer companies with strong earnings visibility and exposure to long-term domestic structural growth themes.

With Q4FY26 earnings season concluded, market focus will shift toward macro developments. Key events in the week ahead include India CPI, US CPI & PPI data and Jobs data. Brent crude and the rupee trajectory will continue to be closely tracked. Last week, The Nifty 50 ended the week [-2.3%] week-on-week, with the Nifty Midcap 100 at [-2.9%] and Nifty Smallcap 100 at [-1%].

Key events this week
- India CPI
- US CPI & PPI
- US Jobs data

The Reserve Bank of India left its lending rate unchanged at 5.25% on June 5 — the third meeting in a row without a change — as it continues to weigh inflation risks against the need to support economic growth. The RBI also lowered its FY27 economic growth forecast to 6.6% from 6.9% earlier, while increasing its inflation estimate to 5.1% from 4.6%, highlighting concerns around higher oil prices, a weaker rupee and the impact of an uneven monsoon.

Alongside the rate decision, the government and RBI announced several measures to attract more foreign investment into India's bond market. Foreign investors have been exempted from the 20% tax on interest earned and the 12.5% capital gains tax on Indian government bonds — making Indian bonds significantly more attractive to global funds.

The RBI also opened up more long-term government bonds for foreign investment and introduced cheaper currency hedging facilities for Indian companies borrowing from abroad. Together, these steps are aimed at bringing more dollars into India and relieving pressure on the rupee.

On the domestic front, IMD has revised its all-India seasonal rainfall forecast to 90% of the Long Period Average for 2026, down from 92% last year, with a 60% probability of deficient rainfall. El Niño conditions are expected to strengthen through the core June-August monsoon period, raising risks to kharif crop output. The monsoon set in over Kerala approximately three days behind the normal June 1 onset date, though early progress remains broadly on track. Since food makes up 42% of what rural households spend, compared to 30% for urban households, weaker harvests push up prices more sharply in rural areas — rural inflation is expected to run 0.8-1% higher than in cities. Taking all these factors into account, we estimate full-year FY27 inflation at around 5.7%, well above the RBI's own forecast of 4.6%. If prices stay high, the RBI may need to raise interest rates later in the year. Companies that depend heavily on rural demand may face pressure in the near term.

The government also took steps this week to speed up defence spending. Defence minister gave the armed forces greater freedom to approve and spend on procurement independently, enabling faster execution of contracts worth over Rs 1.25 lakh crore. In a separate development, the Army is preparing to launch its largest-ever drone buying programme, with purchases from Indian manufacturers expected to cross Rs 20,000 crore.

Within the capital goods and industrial sector, commentary from nearly 30 companies covering engineering, defence, and railways points to strong growth opportunities over the next several years in power transmission, renewable energy, data centres, and defence equipment. Private sector investment has picked up selectively across industries like steel, cement, pharmaceuticals, and consumer goods, with order growth expected at 10-15% in FY27.

(The writer is Head of Research, Wealth Management, MOFSL)

'Rajesh Exports likely to be dropped from PLI scheme'

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) is set to decide in the coming days on removing Rajesh Exports from the list of beneficiaries under the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for advanced chemistry cell (ACC) battery storage, after the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) last week passed an interim order alleging massive financial fraud by the Bengaluru-based firm.

Sources in the ministry told PTI that there is a "strong view" within the department that the company should be dropped from the scheme.

The matter will be placed before Minister of Heavy Industries H D Kumaraswamy, who has returned from an official trip to Kyrgyzstan. "A final call will be taken in the coming days," a source said.

In a 109-page ex parte interim order dated June 3, Sebi alleged that Rajesh Exports — primarily a gold jewellery manufacturer and exporter — inflated revenues by Rs 15.15 lakh crore between FY21 and FY25, amounting to approximately 99.8% of the revenues attributed to its subsidiaries over the period being materially misrepresented.

Mcap of top-7 firms erodes

NEW DELHI, PTI: The combined market valuation of seven of the top-10 most-valued firms eroded by Rs 1.25 lakh crore last week, with Reliance Industries taking the biggest hit, in line with a bearish trend in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark Sensex declined 532.4 points, or 0.71%, and the NSE Nifty dipped 181.05 points, or 0.76%.

From the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries, Bharti Airtel, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and Hindustan Unilever faced erosion from their valuation, while HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and State Bank of India were the gainers.

The market valuation of Reliance Industries dropped Rs 39,718 crore to Rs 17,47,321.40 crore.

DH REVIEW

Motorola Razr Fold: Well-rounded phone with standout camera

ROHIT K V N
BENGALURU, DHNS

A couple of weeks ago, Razr Fold, Motorola's first-generation wide-screen foldable phone, hit stores in India. It comes in two configurations — 12GB RAM + 256GB storage, and 16GB RAM + 512GB storage — for Rs 1,49,999 and Rs 1,59,999, respectively.

Design, build quality and display

The Razr Fold sports a classic notebook-inspired design in a compact form factor. When opened, it measures just 4.6 mm in thickness, and when closed, measures 10.1 mm.

The review unit is a Pantone Blackened Blue variant, featuring a woven diamond piqué-inspired fabric finish. It offers a firm grip and is also easy to operate single-handedly on the cover screen. Motorola offers the device in Pantone Lily White as well.

The device boasts of high-durable titanium reinforcement plate and a precision-engineered teardrop hinge made of aircraft-grade stainless steel to hold the display panels.

It comes with an IP48/IP49 dust-and-water splash-resistant rating, and both the display panels are protected by Corning Gorilla Glass Ceramic 3 shield.

On the front, there is a 6.6-inch full HD+ (2520 x 1080p) LTPO pOLED cover display with 6,000 nits peak brightness, 10-bit colour depth, and 165Hz refresh rate. Thanks to the slim design, 21:9 aspect ratio and low weight, the user can text or browse the web on the cover screen with little hassle.When unfolded, it opens up into a wide 8.1-inch 2K (2484 x 2232p) LTPO pOLED-based Ultra Thin Glass (UTG) screen, and a 120Hz refresh rate. It is brighter (6,200nits) than the cover screen, perfect for binge-watching multimedia content on OTT apps.

The device also features a side-mounted fingerprint sensor (on the right side). It works smoothly with a lower false rejection rate.

Performance

The Motorola Razr Fold is powered by Qualcomm's reliable Snapdragon 8 Gen 5 silicon with Adreno A829 GPU, an advanced liquid cooling system, 16GB LPDDR5X RAM and 512GB UFS 4.1 storage.

Be it running GenAI applications or graphic-rich games, the device works super-smooth without any lag. It runs Android 16-based Hello UI, and is guaranteed to receive seven years of Android OS updates and security patches up to 2033 for protection against cyber threats.

It houses a 6,000mAh cell capacity. With a full charge, the device can deliver a full day of battery life with mixed usage.

With an 80W TurboPower charger, it takes less than an hour to power-up the phone's battery from zero to 100%. It also supports 50W TurboPower wireless-charging capability.

SPEC SHEET

Motorola Razr Fold

Price
₹ 1,49,999 (12GB+256GB)
₹ 1,59,999 (16GB+512GB)

Processor: Qualcomm Snapdragon 8 Gen 5

Display 8.1-inch 2K LTPO pOLED (120Hz) + 6.6-inch FHD+ LTPO pOLED Cover Display (165Hz)

Memory Up to 16GB LPDDR5X RAM, 512GB UFS 4.1 Storage

Battery 6,000mAh; 80W wired & 50W wireless charging

Camera 50MP Main + 50MP Periscope Telephoto + 50MP Ultra-Wide | 20MP + 32MP Selfie

Photography

On the back, the Razr Fold features a triple-camera module — main 50MP (with Sony LYTIA 828) + 50MP periscope telephoto lens (with Sony LYTIA 600 sensor) + 50MP 122-degree ultra-wide sensor with LED flash.

It captures really good pictures in almost all light conditions. With portrait mode, it excels with sharp focus on the subject and artfully blurs the background to get that natural bokeh effect.

One of the highlight aspects of the Razr Fold is the 3X optical zoom, which delivers stunning, sharp photos with almost zero loss of quality. It also supports Moto AI-powered 100X Super Zoom Pro.

At night, though the auto-focus loses some speed, it manages to get good photos, provided you have steady hands. The phone can capture really good and stable 8K resolution videos at 30 fps (frames per second).

It also boasts of GenAI camera tools, including AI Signature Style, AI Group Shot, AI Auto Smile Capture, AI Photo Enhancement Engine, and more. It features a 20MP selfie camera on the cover screen, and inside, it has a 32MP (with Quad Pixel technology) camera. They get good pictures in sunlight and can record up to 4K resolution videos.

Final thoughts

Although the Razr Fold is Motorola's first attempt at a notebook-style foldable phone, it has done a pretty good job with design, build quality, performance, and especially the camera, outranking competitors in the market.

India keen to take part in proposed spaceport in Indonesia

Move aimed at increasing its technological footprint in the Indo-Pacific

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Jakarta next month is likely to see him and Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto discuss India's prospective role in building a spaceport in Biak in the Southeast Asian country.

They are also expected to discuss India's role in developing the Sabang Port in Indonesia's Aceh.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar hosted his counterpart from Jakarta, Sugiono, for the 8th India-Indonesia joint commission meeting in New Delhi on Sunday.

They reviewed the full spectrum of bilateral relations under the India-Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and discussed avenues for further strengthening, besides defence and security cooperation.

They also discussed cooperation in areas like trade, investment, pharma, healthcare, digital, energy, connectivity, education, consular and culture domains, and people-to-people exchanges, according to a press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

"Looking forward to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming visit to Jakarta. The visit will be an important opportunity to further deepen our cooperation and deliver tangible benefits for our peoples," Sugiono wrote on the social media platform after meeting Jaishankar.

New Delhi, according to sources, is keen to help Jakarta build the proposed spaceport on Biak Island in Papua, a province of Indonesia.

Biak's location near the equator makes it ideal for a launch facility for satellites because spacecraft launched from equatorial locations can carry heavier payloads using less fuel.

Subianto's government in Jakarta sees the project as central to Indonesia's ambition of developing a domestic space industry and becoming a space hub in the Indo-Pacific region.

India has had a presence in Biak since the 1990s when the Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) set up a tracking, telemetry, and command (TTC) station on the island. The facility has not only supported satellite launch missions for decades but has also proved to be a strategic asset for India.

New Delhi conveyed to Jakarta its interest in expanding its footprint in Biak beyond the Isro facility, particularly in the proposed spaceport's development. The project also attracted interest from Russia and China.

Given its strategic rivalry with China, participation in developing the spaceport in Biak would help India expand its technological footprint in the Indo-Pacific, add momentum to its space diplomacy with Southeast Asia, and prevent China from gaining unrestricted control over what could emerge as a strategically valuable equatorial launch site and a space technology hub in the region, sources in New Delhi told *DH*.

US downs Iran drones as war reaches 100th day

Pakistan minister in Tehran to restart fresh negotiations

TEHRAN, AFP

The United States said it shot down a pair of Iranian drones threatening the Strait of Hormuz, as the Middle East war reached its 100th day on Sunday with no end in sight.

The milestone came as mediator Pakistan delivered a message to Iran's supreme leader following weeks of indirect negotiations punctuated by tit-for-tat threats and sporadic exchanges of fire.

Efforts to turn a ceasefire into a lasting settlement have repeatedly stalled, while the war has rattled global markets and increased domestic pressure on US President Donald Trump ahead of midterm elections.

The uncertainty is weighing on everyday Iranians too, with fitness trainer Elaheh from Ahvaz telling AFP: "I really have gone numb."

"Daily life? It's a joke. Everything is horrible. We only try to survive," the 32-year-old added, pointing to rising prices.

Farhad, a 35-year-old chef, also said life was becoming "increasingly difficult", noting economic hardship had set in even before the war.

"Things that just a few months ago you might have considered buying have now become dreams and fairy tales," he told AFP.

Pakistan mediation

But there were signs of fresh diplomatic efforts over the weekend, with Pakistan's interior minister Mohsin Naqvi visiting Tehran.

Naqvi said upon his arrival Saturday that he would deliver a "special letter" from Pakistani army chief to Iran's supreme leader, as well as a message from the prime minister "regarding the current situation", according to Iranian state television. "I think it's a very important message," said Naqvi, a frequent visitor to Iran.

Pakistani military leader Syed Asim Munir has played a key role in mediating between Iran and the US following an initial round of direct negotiations.

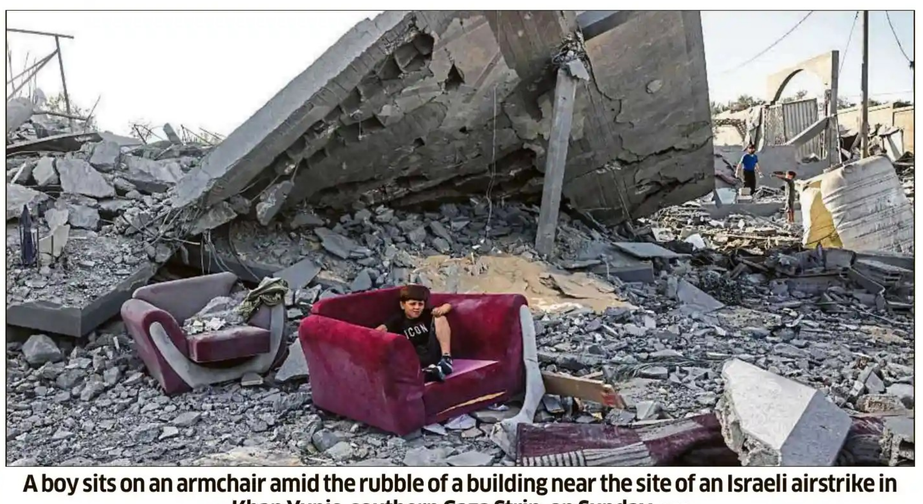
Tehran's no to its assets being used to pay US allies

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said on Sunday that regional governments were "not in a position to demand reparations", responding to reports the U.S. could use Iranian assets to compensate regional allies for war-related damages, reports Reuters. Gharibabadi added in a post on X that Iran's assets were "neither war spoils for Washington nor a payment fund for its allies".

Israel strikes Beirut's southern suburbs days after ceasefire agreement

Iran warns attack will trigger full-scale war across the West Asia

BEIRUT, AP



A boy sits on an armchair amid the rubble of a building near the site of an Israeli airstrike in Khan Yunis, southern Gaza Strip, on Sunday. AFP

Israel struck the southern Beirut suburbs on Sunday, just days after a ceasefire agreement in Washington went into effect.

A statement from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said the strikes were in retaliation for the Hezbollah militant group firing toward northern Israel earlier, and that the attacks targeted "command centres" in the sprawling urban neighbourhoods. Hezbollah did not immediately claim responsibility for firing at Israel.

The strikes come after the Lebanese and Israeli governments in Washington renewed a ceasefire agreement in ongoing talks that Beirut hopes will bring an end to the war across the country. There was no immediate word of casualties.

Israel had already struck the southern suburbs of the Lebanese capital twice since the first agreement between Lebanon and Israel went into effect on April 17. Strikes over southern Lebanon continue daily, meanwhile, and Hezbollah fighters and Israeli troops have also clashed.

Israel announced on Monday that it would strike the southern suburbs after Hezbollah claimed attacks in northern Israel, but last-gasp talks via Washington halted the attacks, on the condition that Hezbollah stop targeting Israel's border towns.

Iran had warned that an attack on the Lebanese capital would trigger renewed full-scale war across the West Asia.

Trump urges more 'surgical' strikes against Hezbollah: NBC

US President Donald Trump called for more "surgical" strikes against Hezbollah in Lebanon and said he is not demanding the conflict be included in a peace deal with Iran, in an interview broadcast Sunday, reports AFP.

"I'd like to see a more surgical attack on Hezbollah. I think it should be more surgical," Trump told NBC's "Meet the Press," according to a transcript of the interview recorded Friday.

Israel carried out strikes on Sunday on the southern suburbs of Beirut, a stronghold of the pro-Iranian Hezbollah, saying it was retaliating for attacks targeting its territory despite a ceasefire.

Taiwan says its vessels in 'standoff' with China ships

TAIPEI, AFP: Taiwan's coast guard said on Sunday its vessels were in a "standoff" with Chinese ships involved in an operation in waters southeast of the island democracy.

Chinese state media reported on Saturday that the "law enforcement operation" was in response to talks between Japan and the Philippines to draw a boundary in waters to the east of Taiwan.

Chennai-born architect of Trump's AI policies to step down

WASHINGTON, PTI

Chennai-born Sriram Krishnan, the architect of US President Donald Trump's policies on artificial intelligence, is stepping down from his role as senior policy adviser at the White House.

The 42-year-old, who has had stints at Microsoft, Facebook and Twitter, made the announcement of leaving his role as Senior Policy Advisor for Artificial Intelligence in a post on X on Saturday.

"I'll be leaving my role at the White House at the end of this month. After a break I'll be working on helping tackle some of the large challenges facing America on AI (more on that later)," Krishnan said.

Krishnan was an architect of the Trump administration's "AI Action Plan", which provided a blueprint to roll back regulation of the emerging technology and promote the build-out of data centres across country. He also was among Trump's tech advisers who crafted an executive order limiting states' ability to regulate AI. "It is hard to express how big a privilege it has been to serve the American people and how grateful I am to have had opportunity to do so. First and foremost, it has been an honour to serve under President Donald Trump. Without his leadership, we would not be leading in AI race," Krishnan said.

US considers buying Chagos Islands: Reports

REUTERS: The White House is considering a plan to buy the Chagos Islands from Mauritius, the Telegraph reported on Sunday.

U.S. officials have drawn up a proposal to bypass the U.K. and make their own deal to take control of Diego Garcia, the report said.

Reuters could not immediately confirm the report. The White House and the UK Foreign Office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The plan is among several options being drafted by the White House, in a paper aimed at providing alternatives to British Prime Minister Keir Starmer ceding sovereignty of the Indian Ocean archipelago to Mauritius, the report said.

The White House has been in regular discussions with Downing Street about securing the future of Diego Garcia, the report added.

Britain's government in April put on hold its deal to cede sovereignty of the Chagos Islands, home to the U.S.-British Diego Garcia air base, which has been criticised by Trump.

Trump said in February the deal was a "big mistake".

US sees nuclear renaissance with new micro-reactor

WASHINGTON, PTI

A small nuclear reactor developed by a private US company has achieved first criticality, a stepping stone in the development of small modular reactors which Washington plans to sell to countries including India.

The Mark-0 demonstration reactor, built by Antares Nuclear, achieved first criticality – the start of a self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction – on June 4, a month ahead of schedule as US President Donald Trump encouraged the private sector to develop newer nuclear reactors.

Experts describe the crucial milestone as the heralding of a second nuclear renaissance in the country that had not tested new technologies in the sector for over four decades.

Maria Korsnick, the President and CEO of the Nuclear Energy Institute, said that the US is keen to sell small reactors to India besides the conventional large reactors such as the AP-1000s. "Yes, there's going to be an appetite for small modular reactors and even potentially microreactors. It just sort of depends on what exactly it is that you want to do, and there's a nuclear solution that's ready for you," Korsnick told PTI in an interview.

The microreactors under development in the US have the capacity to generate power in the range of a few hundred kilowatts to 1.2 megawatts (MW). These reactors can be assembled and flown in an aircraft for deployment anywhere in the world.

The US is also planning to use nuclear power for future space missions.

The Antares reactor is the first among the three small reactors to demonstrate new nuclear capabilities in the US by July 4, the 250th anniversary of American Independence. The other two micro-reactors are -eVinci developed by Westinghouse, and Kaleidos by Radiant.

"I think June 4th will be a historic day in the American nuclear renaissance," Energy Secretary Chris Wright said here.

Last year, Trump signed executive orders to remove regulatory barriers in the development of new nuclear technologies.

The orders granted the Department of Energy authority to approve advanced reactor designs and projects, which was previously the job of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the regulator of the nuclear industry in the US.

North Korea rejects US push for its denuclearisation

The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on Sunday called US attempts to denuclearise North Korea an "anachronistic dream", saying the country would steadily expand its nuclear arsenal in the face of US-led threats, reports AP

The statement came a day before Chinese President Xi Jinping visits North Korea for talks with Kim Jong Un, in his first visit to the country in seven years.

"The US assertion to backbite the status of the DPRK as a nuclear weapons state has no legally binding force and no one will be bound by the US unilateral rhetoric," said Kim's sister and senior official, Kim Yo Jong, using the abbreviation for North Korea's official name.

UK Parl group raises concern over 'escalating' tensions in Pak-occupied Kashmir

LONDON, PTI: A British parliamentary group has raised concerns over reports of communication disruptions, arrests and "escalating tensions" in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and sought clarification from the British government on its assessment of the situation.

India maintains that Pakistan has been in illegal possession of Indian territory in the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

New Delhi asserts that the entire Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are integral and inalienable parts of India by virtue of the "complete, legal and irrevocable accession" of Jammu and Kashmir to India in 1947.

In a letter sent to the UK Foreign Office on Saturday, Bradford East MP Imran Hussain, who is also the chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Kashmir, cited recent reports from the region of a "communications blackout, as part of a broader lockdown, alongside escalating tensions, and restrictions affecting the ability of people in the region to communicate with the outside world".

The letter, signed by nearly 30 MPs, urged the British government to "engage proactively and use all appropriate diplomatic channels to encourage de-escalation and a peaceful resolution" in the region.

Earlier on Saturday, authorities in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) arrested dozens of people following the banning of the Joint Action Awami Committee (JAAC) – a local group involved in violent protests, which led to deaths and injuries last year.

The group was outlawed on Friday by authorities, citing concerns over public order and security.

The JAAC is seeking the implementation of a 38-point agenda that includes subsidised flour and electricity, and the abolition of 12 seats reserved in the regional legislative assembly for Kashmiris.

The parliamentary group said in its letter: "We are also concerned by reports of arrests, including those of British nationals, restrictions on communications, and a breakdown in dialogue between the authorities and representatives of the Joint Awami Action Committee."

WORLD AT A GLANCE

People dressed as 'The Tramp' gather for a group photograph in front of the Manoir de Ban, the final residence of English actor-director Charlie Chaplin, during celebrations marking the 10th anniversary of the Chaplin's World museum in Corsier-sur-Vevey, western Switzerland, on Sunday. AFP

Arab attacker opens fire in Israel, killing 1 and hurting 5

▸ A Palestinian man with Israeli citizenship went on a shooting rampage in several towns in central Israel on Sunday, killing one person and wounding five others, according to Israeli police. The attacker was killed by the police, reports AP from Tel Aviv.

The number of places where people were shot initially raised concerns that there could be multiple, coordinated attackers who had crossed over from the West Bank - evoking memories of the Hamas-led attacks in October 2023 - before police eventually determined that it was a lone gunman and an accomplice.

Rescue services Magen David Adom said that it received the first reports of a shooting at a gas station near the town of Kokhav Yair, located on the Israeli side of the boundary with the West Bank, at around 10:30 am Several other shooting reports were received soon afterwards, in the towns of Tsur Natan, Tsur Yitzhak, and close to the Israeli settlement of Sal'it, located inside the West Bank.

Russian strikes kill four in Kyiv

▸ Russia fired waves of drones and other munitions at Ukraine on Sunday, killing at least four people and damaging a nuclear storage facility in the Chernobyl exclusion zone, Ukrainian officials said, reports AFP from Kyiv.

Radiation levels at the facility remained within normal limits following the attack, although the building's reception was "partially destroyed", according to Ukraine's Energoatom nuclear energy operator.

Moscow and Kyiv have intensified drone strikes on each other in recent months as US-led diplomatic efforts to end the war, now in its fifth year, remain stalled and sidetracked by the conflict in the Middle East.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is set to meet his allies in London later Sunday for talks on how to pressure Russia to end the fighting, after Russian President Vladimir Putin rejected direct peace talks with the Ukrainian leader.

Pope Leo XIV waves as he arrives to take part in the meeting "Building Networks with the World of Culture, Art, Economy and Sports" at the Movistar Arena in Madrid on Sunday. AFP

Ex-wife of UAE royal gets bail

▸ The ex-wife of a nephew of Dubai's ruler has been released on bail, the emirate's government media office said, after she was held during a custody battle, reports AFP from Dubai.

Zeynab Javadli was detained after her former husband, Sheikh Saeed bin Maktoum bin Rashid Al Maktoum, accused her of abducting their three children. "Dubai Public Prosecution confirms that Ms. Zeynab Javadli has been released on bail following questioning," the Dubai Media Office said in a statement on Saturday. It added that the questioning was "in connection with an ongoing investigation into allegations that she abducted her children and refused to return them to their father, who was granted custody".

Conservative presidential candidate Keiko Fujimori casts her vote in a runoff against left-wing candidate Roberto Sánchez in Lima, Peru, on Sunday. REUTERS

Armenia votes amid Moscow threats

▸ Armenians voted Sunday in parliamentary elections that could cement Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's Westward tilt, after threats from Moscow and claims of Russian interference, reports AFP from Yerevan.

Turnout was 58.97 percent when polls closed at 1600 GMT, the Central Election Commission said, with partial results expected early Monday.

Armenia and Russia are technically allies, but Moscow has compared the former Soviet republic's EU ambitions to the same path it claims triggered its 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Karan brace powers Samba

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karan Thaparia scored a quickfire brace as Samba FC danced to a 5-0 win over Stadium FC in a Group B match of the KSFA C Division League Championship at the Bangalore Football Stadium on Sunday.

LOCAL FOOTBALL

Results: C Division: North Zone: Group A: GRK Youths FC w/o RT Nagar, Hebbal FC; Balaharka FC Bangalore: 4 (Tapas Singh 6th, Bharath V 38th, Rimo KS 46th, Mohammed Fazil 54th) bt Bangalore North FC: 1 (Aakash G 39th); Raman Sports Academy: 2 (Anush Manthatti 14th, Nikhil P 54th) bt Samant Sports Academy: 1 (Jai Gurudev V 11th og).
Group B: Samba FC: 5 (Soumya Ranjan Kar 4th, Yuvraj 15th, Bharat KA 21st, Karan Thaparia 47th, 48th) bt Stadium FC: 0; Chitradurga: 3 (Akram NB 7th, Pavan L 10th, 43rd) bt Hawks United Sports FC: 1 (Sathish B 47th); Alchemy Intl FA: 7 (Vedanth 2nd, Wazid Khan 4th, Wahengbam 19th, 38th, MD Mustofa 21st, Aayush Kote 20th, Paoginlen 23rd) bt Gopalan FC: 0.
D Division: Group C: Mysore United FC: 3 (Prakash S 31st, 48th, Suman R 50+2) drew with FC Real Bengalore: 3 (Shreyas Raj Choudhury 3rd, Zaid Ahmed Khan 41st, Rohit M Nair 50th); Gajendra Nagar FC: 4 (Loganathan S 7th, Chetan M Chavan 20+1, Saravana M Sara 26th, Radha Krishna S 36th) bt Hyper FC: 0.

Zuccaro wins main event

BENGALURU RESULTS

Pesi Shroff-trained Zuccaro, ridden by Vivek G, won the H H Krishnaraja Wadiyar Cup, the main event of the races here on Sunday.
1. The Mystic Memory Plate -- 1400M: Glorious Strides (Daulat Chhabria, Teja Gollapudi and Ashok Ranpise) Neeraj Rawal 1, Eagle Eye (Akshay Kumar) 2, Hazel Antony Raj) 3, Sicyon (Yash Narredu) 4. WB: 1/2, 2 3/4, 2. T: 1:25.52. Tote: Rs 41 (w) 12, 11, 17 p; Shp: Rs 31; Thp: Rs 38; Fc: Rs 140; Q: Rs 50; Tri: Rs 376 & 245; Exp: Rs 741 & 224. TB: Rajesh Narredu. Fav: Eagle Eye.
2. The Nandi Plate -- 1400M: Star Comet (Akshay Kumar) 1, Southern Force (Antony Raj) 2, Elveden (Aleemuddin) 3, Dynamic Force (S Sachin) 4. WB: 2 3/4, 1 1/4, 4. T: 1:26.74. Tote: Rs 78 (w) 18, 14, 23 p; Shp: Rs 38; Thp: Rs 54; Fc: Rs 304; Q: Rs 93; Tri: Rs 915 & 485; Exp: Rs 2948 & 1263. TB: Arvind Ganapathy Fav: Dynamic Force.
3. The C N N Family and Friends Legacy Trophy -- 1200M: Regal Beauty (Chaduranga Kanthraj Urs Aditya Thackersey and Manjri Horse Breeders) A Sandesh 1, Sensuous (Suraj Narredu) 2, Legacy Field (Akshay Kumar) 3, Heimirich (Sai Kiran) 4. WB: 1, 3/4, Nose. T: 1:13.69. Tote: Rs 31 (w) 10, 29, 14 p; Shp: Rs 50; Thp: Rs 35; Fc: Rs 254; Q: Rs 143; Tri: Rs 485 & 130; Exp: Rs 3933 & 1555. TB: S S Attaollahi. Fav: Calix.
4. The Speaker's Cup -- 1200M: Rieko (P Arun Kumar) S Sachin 1, Flight On (Akshay Kumar) 2, Power Of Beauty (J H Arul) 3, Victoria Doresaani (Alex Rozario) 4. WB: 2 1/2, 2 1/4, 1 1/4. T: 1:12.36. Tote: Rs 16 (w) 12, 16, 27 p; Shp: Rs 42; Thp: Rs 74; Fc: Rs 71; Q: Rs 45; Tri: Rs 658 & 384; Exp: Rs 5153 & 1152. TB: Pradeep Annaiah. Fav: Rieko.
5. The H H Krishnaraja Wadiyar Cup -- 1600M: Zuccaro (K N Dhunjibhoy, Z K Dhunjibhoy, Anosha Meyers, Vispi R Patel Narielwala, E A Modi, D P Adenwalla and J D Adenwalla (Vivek G) 1, Mayne Magic (Antony Raj) 2, Siege Courageous (Suraj Narredu) 3, Positano (A Sandesh) 4. WB: 2 1/2, 1, 1 1/2. T: 1:40.97. Tote: Rs 14 (w) 14, 15 p; Shp: Rs 25; Thp: Rs 29; Fc: Rs 37; Q: Rs 29 ; Tri: Rs 54 & 16 ; Exp: Rs 86 & 56 . TB: Pesi Shroff. Fav: Zuccaro.
6. The Astounding Plate -- 1600M: Turf Paradise (S Jagadamba) Ashhad Asbar 1, Imperador (Vishal) 2, Pledge (Akshay Kumar) 3, Amazing Stride (Antony Raj) 4. WB: 6 1/2, 1 3/4, 4. T: 1:41.83. Tote: Rs 32 (w) 15, 26, 11 p; Shp: Rs 68; Thp: Rs 37; Fc: Rs 861; Q: Rs 568 ; Tri: Rs 1332 & 285; Exp: Rs 6137 & 4734. TB: V.Lokanath. Fav: Pledge.

Jackpot: Rs 2768 & 231. **Mini jackpot:** Rs 553. **I treble:** 925. **II treble:** 154.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

One-off Test: India vs Afghanistan **(day 3, 9:30 am)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports 2**, **JioHotstar**.

Women's T20 WC: India vs West Indies warm-up **(2:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports 1**, **JioHotstar**.

CRICKET ONE-OFF TEST

Suthar leaves Afghans in a spin

Debutant bags 3/21 as Indians assume total command

MADHU JAWALI
MULLANPUR, DHNS

There may not be many instances of a team deciding against reviewing an on-field umpire's decision thrice in two days only to realise the blunder? Even fewer occasions could be off successive balls.

Afghanistan didn't go for DRS on Saturday, allowing K L Rahul to compile 100 when he could have departed for 16. On Sunday, skipper Hashmatullah Shahidi turned down pacer Azmatullah Omarzai's fervent plea to refer an lbw decision against Shubman Gill. Soon after, the replays showed three reds. The very next ball, Omarzai elicited an edge off Rishabh Pant but wicketkeeper Afar Zazai, believing the ball had come off pad, suggested it would have gone above the stumps. The giant screen showed a clear spike, leaving the Afghans red-faced.

On a pitch that is still good for batting, India didn't need such generosity from the visitors. But they weren't complaining either. Skipper Gill (126, 177b, 15x4, 1x6) added 19 more runs to his total while Pant (81, 121b, 6x4, 3x6) scored 26 more as India, resuming at a strong 368/3, managed some good batting practice to declare their innings closed at 564/8 on the second day of the one-off Test here at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh Stadium.

Afghanistan, in reply, were 113/5 in 39.5 overs after Afsar Zazai played a nothing shot to hand debutant Manav Suthar (3/21) his third wicket of the innings. The visitors still trail the hosts by 451 runs.

Afghanistan pacer Mohammad Saleem showed great skillset and ever greater resolve in tough conditions to bag a rich haul of 6/140. Having gone wicketless in his debut Test against Sri Lanka more than two years ago, this was a highly rewarding return for the strapping 23-year-old.

After Gill and Pant, Washington Sundar (52 n.o.) put on show his growing prowess with the bat with a trouble-free half-century while Suthar displayed his much-talked about batting abilities with a fine cameo (28, 41b, 2x4, 2x6).

Suthar's day got even brighter when the left-arm spinner outshone his senior spin mates Kuldeep Yadav and Washington. While the latter got only two overs to bowl on the day, Kuldeep was clearly out of his depth, struggling to hit the right lengths that could have troubled the tourists on a pitch which offered a discerning turn.

Suthar, however, stood out with his cricketing smarts. The Rajasthan cricketer, a left-arm spinner in the classical mould, impressed with his skills, just getting just enough drift and turn off the pitch. While the 23-year-old definitely deserved all the credit for the way he bowled in his very first Test, Afghanistan batters' needless strokes, completely oblivious to the situation, further played into youngster's hands.

Opener Abdul Malik attempted an ill-advised sweep off Suthar, resulting in a top-edge which Mohammed Siraj scooped up with ease. It was the last over before tea and he had already faced half of it.

The day ended the way tea-break had for Afghanistan and Suthar was the beneficiary of it again. With just two balls to go for the stumps to be drawn, Zazai played a nothing shot to offer a return catch to Suthar.

Prasidh Krishna was impressive with his pace, lengths and angles as he bagged two wickets (2/27).

The pacer removed opener Sediqulla Atal with a delivery that jagged back sharply to send the woodwork cartwheeling. A similar delivery ended skipper Shahidi's resistance, when he was trapped leg-before. The referral confirmed on-field umpire's verdict, rounding off Afghanistan's nightmare with DRS.

India's Manav Suthar (right) celebrates with Yashasvi Jaiswal after dismissing Afghanistan's Afsar Zazai on the second day of the one-off Test in Mullanpur. PTI

SCORE BOARD

INDIA (I Innings; O/n: 368/3):
Jaiswal c Zazai b Saleem 24 (32b, 5x4)
Rahul Gurbaz b Rahman 100 (165b, 11x4)
Sudharsan c Zazai b Saleem 81 (104b, 10x4)
Gill c Zazai b Saleem 126 (177b, 15x4, 1x6)
Pant c Omarzai b Shahidi 81 (121b, 6x4, 3x6)
Jurel b Saleem 19 (20b, 4x4)
Washington (not out) 52 (68b, 5x4, 1x6)
Suthar c Zazai b Suthar 28 (41b, 2x4, 2x6)
Siraj b Saleem 22 (12b, 4x4, 1x6)
Kuldeep (not out) 9 (26b, 1x4)
Extras (B-4, LB-13, NB-4, W-1) 22
TOTAL (for 8 wkts decl, 127 overs) 564
Fall of wickets: 1-41 (Jaiswal), 2-180 (Sudharsan), 3-247 (Rahul), 4-416 (Gill), 5-452 (Jurel), 6-456 (Pant), 7-510 (Suthar), 8-540 (Siraj).
Bowling: Rahman 24-2-91-1, Omarzai 22-5-67-0, Saleem 27-3-140-6 (w-1), Kharoti 23-0-115-0, Malik 7-0-43-0 (nb-4), Shahidi 24-1-91-1.
AFGHANISTAN (I Innings):
Malik c Siraj b Suthar 16 (18b, 3x4)
Atal b Prasidh 17 (27b, 3x4)
Gurbaz c Sudharsan b Suthar 12 (40b, 1x4, 1x6)
Rahmat (batting) 43 (81b, 6x4, 1x6)
Shahidi lbw Prasidh 20 (48b, 4x4)
Zazai c&b Suthar 3 (26b)
Extras (NB-1, W-1) 2
TOTAL (for 5 wkts, 39.5 overs) ..113
Fall of wickets: 1-28 (Malik), 2-40 (Malik), 3-62 (Gurbaz), 4-98 (Shahidi), 5-113 (Zazai).
Bowling: Siraj 6-1-24-0 (w-1), Prasidh 7-0-27-2 (nb-1), Suthar 15.5-7-21-3, Kuldeep 7-0-29-0, Washington 4-0-12-0.

Srishti Kiran

Srishti finishes runner-up in Guatemala

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bengaluru's Srishti Kiran continued her remarkable rise on the international junior circuit, finishing runner-up at the ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors J100 tournament in Guatemala City on Saturday.

Srishti's impressive run came to an end in the final where she went down fighting to top seed Ellery Mendell of the USA 4-6, 3-6.

The final was closely contested in its early stages as the Bengaluru girl raced to a 2-0 lead and later held a 3-1 advantage in the opening set. However, Mendell fought back to claim it 6-4. In the second, the Indian was locked at 3-3 and held two game points that could have given her a crucial 4-3 lead. However, the American seized control and closed out the match.

Poorvika bags golden hat-trick

BENGALURU, DHNS: Dolphin Aquatics' diver Poorvika Venkatesh dominated all the women's event of the NJR Senior State Aquatic Championships to bag a hat-trick of gold at the Kensington Swimming Pool here.

Poorvika won all three diving events -- 1m springboard, 3m springboard and platform -- ahead of her team-mate Shakynah J Rao, who bagged silver in both the springboard events, at the two-day meet. DAC's Nayana P won two bronze medals in the springboards.
Results: Men: 1m springboard: Varun S Pai (Swimlife) 205.05, 1; Om Hongekar (Swi) 162.05, 2; Sohan Suri (DAC) 161.70, 3.
3m springboard: Om Hongekar (Swi) 212.20, 1; Nandan Naik (VSA) 186.80, 2; Sohan Suri (DAC) 173.50, 3.
Platform: Nandan Naik (Var) 151.45, 1; Poojith Raj V (Dolphin Aquatics) 145.70, 2.
Women: 1m springboard: Poorvika Venkatesh (Dol) 140.40, 1; Shakynah J Rao (Dol) 128.30, 2; Nayana P (DAC) 110.80, 3.
3m springboard: Poorvika Venkatesh (Dol) 153.40, 1; Shakynah J Rao (Dol) 143.70, 2; Nayana P (DAC) 105.35, 3.
Platform: Poorvika Venkatesh (Dolphin Aquatics) 144.00, 1.

Suthar gives a trailer of his talent

Spinner delivers on the hype with an all-round show

MADHU JAWALI
MULLANPUR, DHNS

Manav Suthar has been one of the most talked about young cricketers in India over the last couple of years. And his performances across formats and teams, including India A, don't belie the hype around him. His red-ball skills and wicket-taking abilities have been particularly attracting selectors' attention, and the left-arm spinning all-rounder was rewarded with a place in the Indian squad in the one-off Test against Afghanistan here.

Slotted into the playing 11, the Rajasthan player gave a glimpse of his talent on the second day of the match, with an impressive all-round show. He produced a 28-run cameo with two fours and as many sixes and then returned to bag 3/21 that pushed Afghanistan to the brink.

Washington Sundar, who has been Suthar's team-mate at Gujarat Titans, knows a thing or two about the junior colleague.

"He has been brilliant," said Washington in his post-day address to the media. "We players who have been playing with him the last few years, know what he could actually bring to the table, especially in this format (red-ball cricket) and the amount of skill sets obviously he has got; he has sort of worked on them over the years. It was a genuine treat to watch, especially at this level for India. To bring out his best skill sets, especially on day one, is amazing," he offered.

Suthar's inclusion comes on the back of 129 wickets in 29 first-class matches at an average of 25.76. He has eight four-wicket, six five-wicket and three 10-wicket hauls. While the young bowler will be put to sterner tests as he plays stronger opponents in different conditions, the promise was apparent. A left-arm spinner who belongs to the old school -- where loop, drift and turn are paramount -- Suthar has the potential to last long.

"He is a genuine spinner in terms of how much he could actually spin the ball, how many revs he could actually impart on the ball," Washington continued.

"That has always been his strength over the years in many formats. He has played a lot with red ball, especially in the last 2-3 years and done really well every single time he has played in this format.

"I think he gives all his energy on the ball every single day of the week. I mean, he uses a lot of his body. That's there for us to sort of see and observe because it's quite evident.

"Every time he gets into his load-up and releases the ball, he sort of gives all of his energy into the ball. That's an amazing skill as well as an attitude to bring in every single day."

India's left-arm spinner Manav Suthar showed why there's been so much talk about him over the last couple of years with a three-wicket haul against Afghanistan on Sunday. PTI

England go 1-0 up against Kiwis

LONDON, AFP: Gus Atkinson's love-affair with Lord's continued on Sunday as England overwhelmed New Zealand by 115 runs to win the first Test.

New Zealand, set 254 to win, were dismissed for 138 before lunch on the fourth day in what was the 150th Test staged at Lord's -- the most at any ground.

Surrey paceman Atkinson took 5/30 -- his fourth five-wicket innings haul in three Tests at Lord's -- as England went 1-0 up in a three-match series.

But fellow seamer Ollie Robinson was named player-of-the-match after marking his first Test in over two years with seven wickets in the match -- including a Test-best haul of 5-39, featuring a rare triple-wicket maiden, in New Zealand's meagre first-innings 113. England's success also owed much to debutant opener Emilo Gay's 57 in their second-innings 226.

On Sunday, Devon Conway (41) and Glenn Phillips (44 not out) kept England at bay with a seventh-wicket partnership of 53 -- New Zealand's highest of a low-scoring match.

England still only needed 19 overs to take the five wickets they required for victory as their first Test since a woeful 4-1 Ashes series loss in Australia, ended in a comprehensive success.

New Zealand's overnight 55/5 became 58/6 when Tom Blundell was lbw to fast bowler Josh Tongue.

Left-handed opener Conway, who resumed on 19 not out, slashed Tongue through gully for four.
Brief scores: England: 140 all out & 226 all out in 56 overs (Ben Duckett 33, Emilio Gay 57, Jamie Smith 39, Ollie Robinson 29; Nathan Smith 6-70, Will O'Rourke 2-46) vs New Zealand: 113 all out & (O/n:55/5) 138 all out in 40.3 overs (Devon Conway 41, Glenn Phillips 44, Gus Atkinson 5-30, Ollie Robinson 2-38, Josh Tongue 2-48). **Result:** England won by 115 runs. **Series:** England lead 3-match series 1-0. **PoM:** Ollie Robinson. Next match: June 17 (London).

Gus Atkinson

Animesh bags 200m silver

TAIPEI, PTI: National record holder Animesh Kujur finished second in the men's 200m with the fourth fastest time of career at the New Taipei City Athletics Open here on Sunday.

The 23-year-old Indian, whose national record stands at 20.32 seconds, clocked a solid 20.47 seconds.

Animesh has also run 20.40 seconds and 20.45 seconds last year, and thus his effort on Sunday was his fourth fastest time.

Thailand's Puripol Boonson ran a lifetime best of 20.03 seconds to finish on top and become the joint third-fastest Asian man of all time over the 200m.

Yashas, Prakruthi reign supreme

BENGALURU, DHNS

Yashas Palaksha

Prakruthi R Rao

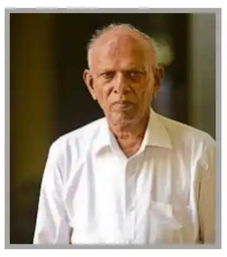
Country's fastest active 400m hurdler Yashas Palaksha ran to the top spot in the men's 400m flat with a new personal best of 46.82 seconds at the Indian Athletics Series 8 in Pune on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Karnataka's newly-crowned sprint champion Prakruthi R Rao clocked her personal best 11.65 seconds to win the wind-aided women's 100m event to finish ahead of the recent double U-20 Asian Championships medallist Nipam (11.69). Chitradurga's Prakruthi, who trains in Chennai, clocked the same timing at the state meet to stun Unnathi Aiyappa here last Thursday.

Further, Karnataka state champions clinched top spots as long jumper Pavana Nagraj and javelin thrower Karishma Sanil won their respective categories with minimum effort in depleted fields. Pavana leapt to 5.72 while Karishma hurled the javelin to 51.81 to take the top spot in a two-athlete event.

Meanwhile, Karnataka bagged further podium finishes on the day as Nagendra A Naik took third place in the men's discus throw final with an attempt of 53.39 while Delhi's Arjun (55.28) won the event.
Results: Winners and Karnataka only: Men: 100m: Harjit Singh (Air) 10.17s. **110m hurdles:** Sidhdhanth Umananda (ONGC) 14.18. **400m**: Yashas P (Rel) 46.82. **400m hurdles:** Karthik Yarravarapu (AP) 51.63. **1500m:** Yoonus Shah (JSW) 3:50.21. **10,000m:** Harmanjot Singh (JSW) 29:43.89. **Discus throw:** Arjun (Del) 55.28m, 1; Nagendra A Naik (Kar) 53.39, 3. **High jump:** Bharathi Viswanathan (Nav) 2.05. **Triple jump:** Mohanraj J (TN) 16.17. **Long jump:** Anurag CV (Ker) 7.52. **Shot put:** Samardeep Singh Gill (MP) 18.64. **Javelin throw:** Manok Kumar (TN) 75.18.
U-20: Prominent results only: 100m: Aditya Pisal (Mah) 10.23s. **110m hurdles:** Fasalul Haque (Rel) 13.61 (NR: 13.69, Yuvaraj S, Prayagraj in 2025).
Women: 100m: Prakruthi R Rao (Kar) 11.65s. **100m hurdles:** Akschida S (TN) 13.72. **400m:** Aishwarya Mishra (Mah) 54.22. **800m:** Lili Das (Utt) 2:09.43. **10,000m:** Ravina Gayakwad (Mah) 36:34.55.
Triple jump: I Ilango (TN) 13.57. **Discus throw:** Aditi Bugad (Mah) 48.22. **Shot put:** Srishti Vig (Del) 16.42. **Long jump:** Pavana Nagraj (Kar) 5.72. **Javelin throw:** Karishma Sanil (Rel) 51.81.

Raju, man who officiated the famous tied Test



Vikrama Raju
(1934-2026)

SIDNEY KIRAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Vikrama Raju, better known to the cricketing world as one of the two umpires who stood in the famous tied Test between India and Australia in then Madras (now Chennai) in September 1986, passed away due to age-related illness in Mysuru on Sunday. He was 92.

Raju, who worked with Deccan Herald and Prajavani in the circulation department for over three decades but followed his passion for umpiring simultaneously, became a part of cricketing folklore as the one who gave India's last man Maninder Singh out LBW to Australia spinner Greg Matthews when the scores between the two nations were even. In Test cricket's 149-year history, it remains as one of the two tied matches with the other being between Australia and West Indies at Brisbane in Dec 1960.

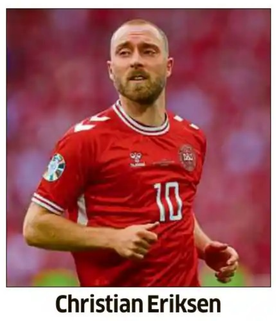
"It was a perfect decision, and there was no DRS those days," recalled Raju, born on New Year's Day in 1934, in an interaction with this publication a few years ago. "(Ravi) Shastri should not have taken the single, and we would have won," he added.

After Australia declared their second innings at 170/5 at Chepauk, India went about their pursuit of the 348-run target in right earnest before losing their way with a middle-order collapse. Ravi Shastri then engineered a fightback, but the fascinating game was back on the edge when Shivlal Yadav departed with four runs to get. Shastri then scored a two and a single to stunningly give Maninder the strike. Mathews struck a nervous Maninder flush on the pads, and as the Australians went up in appeal, so did Raju's index finger, leaving the Indians flummoxed. Raju never officiated in a Test match again.

While a lot has been spoken and written about the famous Test, Raju, who started umpiring in the 1950s at local leagues in Bengaluru before graduating to Ranji Trophy level in 1959, also stood in another tied international. Six months after the infamous Test, Raju was in the middle when the ODI between India and Pakistan in Hyderabad ended in a tie after Abdul Qadir was run out. This time though, Raju was not the man in the spotlight with his colleague Sunit Ghosh ruling Qadir out. For the record, India were declared winners for losing a wicket less than Pakistan's seven.

Raju, who joined *DH*&PV in the early 1960s before retiring in 1995, lived in Bengaluru for the longest of times before shifting to Mysuru a few years ago. He suffered a fall on Sunday morning at his home when his family rushed him to the hospital, where he succumbed to internal bleeding. He's survived by his wife, son, daughter, and two grandchildren.

TEAMS: 48 VENUES: 16 TOURNAMENT SPAN: 39 DAYS



Christian Eriksen

Denmark's Eriksen collapses again

COPENHAGEN, REUTERS: Danish soccer player Christian Eriksen collapsed on the pitch in a match against Ukraine on Sunday, but was conscious, the Danish Football Federation said in a social media post.

"Christian Eriksen is conscious and is doing well under the circumstances," the federation said in a statement on X, adding that the friendly had been called off.

In 2021, Eriksen collapsed during a European championship match in Copenhagen and was given life-saving CPR treatment. He was later fitted with a special heart-starting device known as an Implantable Cardioverter-Defibrillator (ICD).

Pirated goods seized in Mexico

MEXICO CITY, AFP: Dozens of packages stuffed with shiny football jerseys have piled up in a Mexico City warehouse, each with a sticker reading "seized merchandise" -- pirated products for the 2026 World Cup.

Authorities have seized $1.3 million worth of counterfeit stock in the capital over the past three months.

Stroll in College for Argentina

Brazil wrap up the their preparation with 2-1 defeat of Egypt

COLLEGE STATION (US), AFP

Argentina eased to a 2-0 victory against a lacklustre Honduras in the reigning champions' penultimate World Cup warm-up game in Texas on Saturday.

Lautaro Martinez and Giuliano Simeone scored the goals in a game dominated by Argentina in College Station.

Lionel Messi was on the bench but not used by coach Lionel Scaloni as he nurses the superstar back to fitness for the World Cup group games after he suffered a hamstring injury on May 24.

A lethargic game burst into life on 37 minutes when Nicolas Tagliafico was fouled in the penalty area by Cristopher Melendez and Inter Milan forward Martinez drove home the spot kick low to his left to make it 1-0 on 37 minutes.

The lively Martinez was the creator when Argentina doubled their lead on 54 minutes as his intelligent backheel set up Atletico Madrid's Simeone to fire past Honduras goalkeeper Edrick Menjivar.

In other highlights, Giovani Lo Celso hit the crossbar with a superb curling shot from outside the area in the first half and Tomas Aranda's second-half attempt was well saved by the Honduras 'keeper.

Samba boys shine

Endrick and Bruno Guimaraes scored the goals as Brazil wrapped up their pre-World Cup preparations with a 2-1 victory over fellow qualifiers Egypt in Cleveland on Saturday.

Teenage talent Endrick scored Brazil's winner at Huntington Bank Field after Egypt had rattled the five-time world champions with an early equaliser to cancel out Guimaraes' opener.

The victory completed a smooth build-up for Brazil coach Carlo Ancelotti, whose team had routed Panama 6-2 in Rio de Janeiro last Sunday at the Maracana Stadium.

Brazil open their World Cup Group C campaign against 2022 semifinalists Morocco on June 13, before further first round fixtures against Scotland and Haiti.

African qualifiers Egypt launch their World Cup against Belgium on June 15 before facing New Zealand and Iran in Group G.

England edge NZ

Harry Kane's 79th international goal edged England to a 1-0 win over New Zealand as the Three Lions' World Cup preparations got off to an underwhelming start in the Florida heat on Saturday.

Kane flicked in Djed Spence's cross in first half stoppage time as England laboured to victory against a side 81 places below them in the world rankings.

New Zealand were thrashed 4-0 by Haiti on Wednesday but Thomas Tuchel's men found clear-cut chances far harder to come by in their first experience of the brutal conditions in the United States.

3 DAYS to GO

Germany win

Kai Havertz and Leroy Sane led Germany to a 2-1 win over the United States in Chicago on Saturday, but an impressive performance in defeat by the World Cup co-hosts will do little to dampen feverish expectations among home fans.

In both teams' final warm-up game before the tournament kicks off next week, the US created a flurry of chances including a remarkable Antonee Robinson strike from outside the box to level the game, before four-time World Cup winners Germany regained the lead.

The US begin their World Cup Friday in Los Angeles against Paraguay, before clashes with Australia and Turkey.

Portugal, Belgium roar

Portugal and Belgium both won in front of their home fans on Saturday ahead of their latest attempts at World Cup breakthroughs.

Germany's Kai Havertz (left) scores his team's opening goal during their 2-1 defeat of United States in a friendly at Soldier Field in Chicago on Saturday. AFP

Iran arrive in Mexico as US visa row rages

TIJUANA (MEXICO), AFP

Iran's World Cup squad landed in Mexico on Sunday under the shadow of a bitter diplomatic row, after the United States -- which is in open military conflict with Tehran -- refused to issue visas for some team support staff.

The dispute erupted just days before Thursday's kick-off of the 2026 World Cup, which is being jointly hosted by the United States, Mexico and Canada.

After departing from their training camp in Turkey a day earlier, the Iran team landed early Sunday in the Mexican border city of Tijuana.

The team will be based in the city throughout the tournament, despite playing their entire group stage in the United States.

When they do play in the US, it will be the first World Cup to see a host nation receive the team of a country it is at war with.

Iran's team spent nearly three weeks at a training camp in Antalya, using their time in Turkey to apply for visas to travel to Mexico, Canada and the United States.

On the eve of their departure for Mexico, the players received their US visas, Washington's envoy to Turkey Tom Barrack said on X late on Friday.

But Iran's embassy to Turkey said support staff had been denied visas -- 15 administrative and management staff are concerned, an Iranian diplomat and state TV said.

Travel diktat

Adding to the tensions, Iran's ambassador to Mexico said on Saturday the squad had been notified that, under their visa conditions, the team must enter and leave US soil on the same day as their matches.

"We can enter in the morning and we must leave the same day," Abolfazl Pasandideh told reporters.

That appeared to contradict what the team's spokesman Amir Mahdi Alavi told state TV earlier.

Iran's players touchdown at the Tijuana International Airport in Mexico on Sunday. AFP

Luvnith, Nikin star for Sir Syed Cricketers

BENGALURU, DHNS: Luvnith Sisodia's 118 and Nikin Jose SJ's 98 powered Sir Syed Cricketers to a 24-run win over Century Cricketers in the KSCA YS Ramaswamy Memorial Trophy for Group I-I, II, III Division and Qualifiers from 4th and 5th division Clubs here.

LOCAL CRICKET

Brief scores: Sir Syed Cricketers: 308 all out in 50 overs (Arnav Mishra 26, Nikin Jose SJ 98, Luvnith Sisodia 118; Sankalp S Shettennavar 2-52, Karthik CA 3-46, Madhav P Bajaj 2-60) bt Century Cricketers: 284 all out in 48.4 overs (Harsha Wardhan Khuba 77, Madhav P Bajaj 35, Tanish Mahesh 50; Kumar LR 2-48, Kushaal Mahesh Wadhwani 2-53, Rajendra Danganavar 2-52, Nikin Jose SJ 2-44).

Engrades CC: 212 all out in 42 overs (Shreyas 35, Abu 35, Hemanth Patil 68; Ambresh K 3-25, Ritesh Bhatkal 4-44, Abhijit S 2-37) lt to Palar SC, Kolar: 216/6 in 35.2 overs (Abhishek M 40, Preetesh 88; SK Rathod 2-40, Vishnu Balaji K 2-33).

Yankees CC: 215 all out in 48.4 overs (K Akhil 26, Clement Rajmohan K 53, Anirudh Deepak 51, Nitin Reddy N 31; Darshan MB 3-43, Chukka Naga Santhosh Pavan 3-45, Likhit Bannur 2-34) lt to Mount Joy CC: 221/8 in 42 overs (Pareexith Okkunda 30, Syaamantak Anirudh 72, Likhit Bannur 58; Nirag Chethan 3-40, Anirudh Deepak 3-43).

Modern CC: 89 all out in 21.5 overs (Abhay Rangan A 45; Ajay Bhide 6-14, Pradyumna AN 2-15) lt to Chintamani SA, Chintamani: 91/4 in 10.1 overs (Gyan Somaiah 58, Mankalesh RJ 4-31).

Bangalore United CC (1): 116/9 in 22 overs (Sharath Srinivas 30, Venkatesh M 26; Vivek Naik 2-25, Shivu M 2-5) lt to Dooravani Cricketers (1): 118/6 in 20.5 overs (Keerthi M 31, Harshit Pai 27; Deepak Devadiga 2-30, Rohith Kumar AC 2-26). (Start of the match was delayed due to wet outfield. Match was revised to 22 overs per side).

Cambridge CC: 252 all out in 50 overs (Suhas R 42, Shubham Kumar Sinha 59, Chinmay NA 67, Rehan Mohammed 34; Neeraj 2-57, Amogh R 4-52, Karthik J 2-36) bt Minerva CC: 242 all out in 47.1 overs (Arnav Arun Bharadwaj 35, Shaurya NS 28, Darshan R 34, Anish KN 89; Omkar HR 2-51, Pranav Aswath 3-43, Advith M Shetty 2-42).

Vijaya CC, Malur: 95 all out in 18.5 overs (Tejas KA 2-14, Maribasava Gowda 3-23, Pranav Bhatia 3-9, Rushi B Shetty 2-18) lt to Rajajinagar Cricketers: 99/3 in 14.4 overs (Shivakumar BU 26, Karna Surya Vamshi 30).

Social Cricketers: 224 all out in 46.4 overs (Krishav Somasundar 36, Aadarsh Prajwal S 42, Shaun Tristan Joseph 46; Nithin Shanthaveri 2-19, Ishaan S 3-44, Arya J Gowda 2-48) bt Jawans CC: 92 all out in 23.1 overs (Arsalaan M 43; Vyshak V 2-8, Shreevathsa R Acharya 4-38, Anmol Mathur 3-14).

Zverev finally tastes Slam glory

German downs Italy's Cobolli in dramatic finale

PARIS, AFP

Alexander Zverev finally secured his maiden Grand Slam title with a dramatic five-set victory over Italy's Flavio Cobolli in the French Open final on Sunday.

The second seed became the first German man to win a major tournament since Boris Becker at the 1996 Australian Open with a 6-1, 4-6, 6-4, 6-7 (5/7), 6-1 win after four hours and 16 minutes on Court Philippe Chatrier.

It was Zverev's fourth Grand Slam final and second at Roland Garros after some heartbreaking near misses in his career.

Cobolli, the 10th seed, was bidding to become the first Italian man to win the French Open in 50 years.

The 24-year-old had never even played a Slam semi-final before, let alone a final, after his last-four opponent Matteo Arnaldi withdrew from the tournament through illness.

Both players appeared to struggle with nerves at various points in the match, especially Cobolli during an error-strewn first set.

But Zverev's greater experience showed in a deciding set that was far tenser than the scoreline suggested, as he managed to get over the line.

The 29-year-old was handed a golden opportunity to break his Grand Slam duck by the injury-enforced absence of reigning champion Carlos Alcaraz and surprise early exits for Jannik Sinner and Novak Djokovic.

The world number three was not always in control, making 54 unforced errors, but did enough to finally shed the tag of being one of the best players to have never won a major.

Zverev had previously also lost in six Slam quarter-finals and seven semi-finals, alongside his three final defeats.

The most agonising miss of all was his first major final when he blew a two-set lead and failed to serve for the championship against Dominic Thiem at the 2020 US Open.

The now-retired Thiem was watching on from the stands at Roland Garros as Zverev belatedly put the memories of that match to bed six years later.

Cobolli's nervy start

Cobolli made a nervy start and appeared to be struggling to deal with the occasion as the first set quickly got away from him in 39 minutes, making 16 unforced errors.

He managed to settle into the match with three successive holds of serve in the second set and then made his move out of nowhere to break in the seventh game.

Zverev had been completely untroubled on serve previously, but produced a scrappy game featuring two double-faults and a wild forehand on break point before turning to gesticulate angrily towards his coaching staff.

Cobolli started to grow in confidence and served out the set to breathe life into the final.

A higher-quality third set disappeared from Cobolli's grasp in the 10th game, though, as from 30-0 up, he lost four points in a row, including a poor forehand that flew well wide on set point.

Germany's Alexander Zverev celebrates with the trophy after winning the French Open final against Italy's Flavio Cobolli in Paris on Sunday. REUTERS

Aditi, Pranavi in Asiad squad

NEW DELHI, PTI

Yuvraj Sandhu and Aditi Ashok were among a six-member Indian golf team named on Sunday for the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, later this year.

A LPGA Tour regular, Aditi won an individual silver medal in the 2022 Asian Games in Hangzhou, China.

Sandhu (world No. 451), Veer Ahlawat (558) and Saptak Talwar (576) are the three male members while Aditi (135), Diksha Dagar (221) and Pranavi Urs (270) are the three female players named by Indian Golf Union (IGU).

The golf events for both men and women are scheduled from September 30 to October 3 at the Kasugai Country Club East Course.

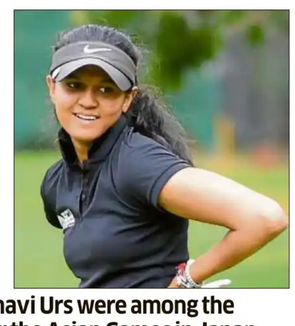
The IGU, led by Brijinder Singh, said the entries were decided as per its selection policy for Asian Games.

"We have got a supremely talented and efficient squad which has someone like Yuvraj Sandhu, who won seven times on the PGTI circuit last year. Then there are the likes of Aditi Ashok and Diksha Dagar who have won multiple times on the Ladies European Tour (LET). The entries were decided purely through World Rankings. I am confident that the Indian team will finish on the podium this time," Brijinder said in a release.

India has had an illustrious history in golf at the Asian Games, clinching three gold and three silver medals so far.

The Indian quartet of Lakshman Singh, Rishi Narain, Amit Luthra and Rajeev Mohta won the team gold back in 1982 Asian Games in New Delhi.

India squad: Men: Yuvraj Sandhu, Veer Ahlawat, Saptak Talwar. **Women:** Aditi Ashok, Diksha Dagar, Pranavi Urs.



Aditi Ashok (left) and Pranavi Urs were among the six-member Indian squad for the Asian Games in Japan.

Andrea, Aaradhya star in SUCC (1) victory

BENGALURU, DHNS: Andrea Michelle Lobo missed out on a well-deserved hundred while team-mate Aaradhya Mallik picked up a four-for as Swastic Union Cricket Club (1) trounced Wilson Garden Cricket Club by 118 runs in the KSCA Senior Women's T20 tournament.

Brief scores: Swastic Union Cricket Club (1): 177/1 in 20 overs (Advika 41, Andrea Michelle Lobo 96) bt Wilson Garden Cricket Club: 59 all out in 14.3 overs (Lavanya M 2-13, Vaishnavi Beerappa Hunashyala 3-5, Aaradhya Mallik 4-3).

Vijaya Cricket Club, Malur: 35 all out in 13.1 overs (Prathiksha C 2-6, Monika D 2-7, Saanvi Pramod Iyer 2-2) lt to Coles Cricket Club: 36 for no loss in 3.2 overs.

Palar Sports Club, Kolar: 246/5 in 20 overs (Myra Jain 33, Vrinda 65, BG Tejashwini 44, Prathyusha Challuru 38; Hamsinee Arun 2-48, Novinaa T 3-37) bt Minerva Cricket Club: 53/9 in 20 overs (Priya Chavan 2-17, Prathyusha Challuru 3-8).

Friends Union Cricket Club (1): 200/3 in 20 overs (Shubha S 26, Krishika Reddy 45, Chandasi K 89) bt Young Lions Club: 90/6 in 20 overs (Pranathi KS 48, Ananya Hegde 2-11).

Vultures Cricket Club: 104/7 in 20 overs (Prakruthi N Gopalkrishna 27, Annapurna Bhosale 41; Komal 2-11) bt Sir Syed Cricketers: 103 all out in 20 overs (Tanushree M 41, Sahana S Pawar 2-20, Chinmayi Shivanand 3-19, Aadya 2-3).

Cambridge Cricket Club: 110/5 in 20 overs (Rimjhim Shukla 54; Poojitha G 2-15) lt to Vijaya Cricket Club : 111/5 in 11.4 over (Mansi Satish More 50, Shreya B Pote 25; Sharvari R Shetty 2-46, Ganavi R 3-3).

Rajajinagar Cricketers: 99 all out in 19 overs (Niki Prasad 37, Lavanya Chalana 27; Subhra Majumder 2-19, Deeksha J 2-25, Maria Francica 2-15, Nandani Chauhan 2-5) lt to Swastic Union Cricket Club (2): 103/1 in 12.1 overs (Yashika K Gowda 48, Nandani Chauhan 38).

Jawans Cricket Club: 83/7 in 20 overs (Nesara Saptha Girish 29; Rameshwari 2-9, Pavitra 3-14) lt to South End Sports Club: 84/2 in 10.5 overs (Monica C Patel 44, Aditi R 25).

Young Orion's crowned champions

BENGALURU, DHNS: Young Orion's SC scored an 84-71 victory over GST & Customs in the final to emerge champions of the Devanga Union Centenary Celebration of Prof. NC Parappa State-level Floodlit basketball tournament for Men here on Sunday.

Sumanth was the top-scorer with 20 points for Young Orion's who were also aided by Abhishek Gowda's 16-point effort during their victory.

LOCAL BASKETBALL

Results: Finals: Young Orion's SC: 84 (Sumanth 20, Abhishek Gowda 16) bt GST & Customs: 71 (Dheeraj Reddy 23, Pratyanshu Tomar 22). HT: 46-35.

Semifinals: Young Orion's SC: 80 (Arjun Yadav 22, Shashank 14) bt DYES Bangalore: 72 (Manoj 24, Bathesh 16). HT: 41-40; GST & Customs: 71 (Dheeraj Reddy 25, Pratyanshu Tomar 12) bt Bank of Baroda: 63 (Harish 13, Jeo 11). HT: 33-32.

Antonelli wins Monaco GP

MONACO, AP

Kimi Antonelli's rise to the top of Formula 1 continued in bizarre circumstances as the 19-year-old Mercedes driver won a much-delayed Monaco Grand Prix on Sunday.

Antonelli was on course for victory with 10 laps remaining when the race was red-flagged after parts of the asphalt broke away and two cars crashed in quick succession, one of them third-placed Charles Leclerc.

Kimi Antonelli

After the race resumed from a standing start, Antonelli took his fifth Grand Prix win in a row and extended his already vast standings lead. He's the youngest F1 winner in Monaco.

"Thank you so much guys, the car was a beast today," he told the Mercedes team.

Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton crossed the line second and Alpine's Pierre Gasly third. Red Bull's Isack Hadjar was moved up to third due to a penalty for Gasly.

Marschall outsmarts Duplantis

STOCKHOLM, AFP: Armand 'Mondo' Duplantis suffered a first pole vault defeat in almost three years when he failed to get past 6 metres at the Diamond League meeting in Stockholm on Sunday before taking a break to get married.

Australia's Kurtis Marschall outjumped Duplantis.

They were the only two competitors left after Duplantis cleared 5.80m.

Marschall then went over at 5.90m.

After Duplantis failed at 6.0m, Marschall passed, forcing Duplantis to lift the bar to 6.05m where he failed again.

In other events, Audrey Werro set the fastest time in the women's 800m in 43 years, teenager Cooper Lutkenhaus sparkled on his Diamond League debut and Melissa Jefferson-Wooden won in her first 100m of the season.

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